

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

FORT KING SITE

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United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: Fort King Site

Other Name/Site Number: Camp King, Cantonment King, 8MR60

2. LOCATION

Street & Number: Between SE Fort King St. and NE 3rd St., East of NE 37th Terrace Not for publication: X

City/Town: Ocala Vicinity: X

State: Florida County: Marion Code: 083 Zip Code: 34470

3. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property: Private: Public-Local: X Public-State: Public-Federal:

Category of Property: Building(s): District: Site: X Structure: Object:

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing

1

1

Noncontributing

2 buildings

sites

3 structures

1 object

6 Total

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National Register: N/A

Name of Related Multiple Property Listing: N/A

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**4. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this       nomination       request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property       meets       does not meet the National Register Criteria.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Certifying Official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal Agency and Bureau

In my opinion, the property       meets       does not meet the National Register criteria.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Commenting or Other Official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal Agency and Bureau

**5. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION**

I hereby certify that this property is:

- Entered in the National Register
- Determined eligible for the National Register
- Determined not eligible for the National Register
- Removed from the National Register
- Other (explain):

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

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**6. FUNCTION OR USE**

Historic: Defense

Sub: Fortification

Current: Domestic  
Landscape

Sub: Single Dwelling  
Unoccupied Land

**7. DESCRIPTION**

Architectural Classification: N/A

Materials: N/A

Foundation: N/A

Walls: N/A

Roof: N/A

Other: N/A

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**Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.**

The site of Fort King is situated in the middle of Marion County in north-central Florida (see Figures 1 and 2). The site is located in the eastern portion of the present-day city of Ocala in a low-density subdivision. More specifically, the Fort King tract consists of 36.2 acres located in the northwestern quarter of Section 14 of Township 15 South, Range 22 East on the Ocala East (1991) USGS quadrangle map (see Figures 2 and 3). The topography of the Fort King site can best be described as “rolling,” with vegetation consisting mostly of scattered oaks and pine.

The Fort King site consists of the archaeological remains of the original Fort King (1827) destroyed by the Seminoles in 1836, the rebuilt Fort King (1837) (see Figures 4 and 5), and several outlying buildings associated with the fort, including the tentatively identified sutler’s store (1837) (see Figure 6). All of these elements have been identified through the presence of intact features, such as posts, refuse pits, stockade trenches, and artifact concentrations. These archaeological elements are all located on a sandy hill now partially vegetated with grass and oak and pine trees (see Figures 7 and 8). Additionally, archaeological remains associated with many military groups and Seminole Indians who bivouacked and/or camped around Fort King have been recovered throughout the proposed Fort King National Historic Landmark (Neill 1955; Gallant 1968; Hunt and Piatek 1991; Piatek 1995b, c; Ellis 1995; GARI 1998, 1999).

**Environmental Setting**

The environmental setting of the Fort King site is significant as it directly affected the choice of the specific area used for the construction of the fort. Archaeological investigations have documented that Fort King was constructed on the top of a hill located near the south-central portion of the Fort King site. This location is surrounded on three sides by a natural slope. This topographic setting would have been strategically ideal. Attack from the east, north, or south upon this location would have required that the enemy progress uphill towards the palisade of the fort. The location would also have provided a commanding view once surrounding vegetation was cleared. The top of the hill is relatively level and roughly square in shape, measuring approximately 150 feet by 175 feet. This level area equates closely to the dimensions of the first Fort King, 152 feet by 162 feet, as documented by Glassell’s 1827 plan for Fort King (see Figure 9) (Hunt and Piatek 1991:186).

Undoubtedly, the proximity to a source of fresh water would have been a necessary precondition for the final selection of the exact location of Fort King. Along the eastern edge of the Fort King site is a small gully which once held a spring-fed creek or stream (see Figures 3 and 10). This was probably the freshwater source for the fort.

A final consideration in site selection for the location of Fort King would have been the presence of a nearby source of lumber for construction material. Based on archaeological samples, Baker (1974) concludes that cypress and pine were used in the construction of Fort Foster, a Seminole War fort that saw limited action. Pine trees are currently abundant at the Fort King site today and would have been even more plentiful at the time of the fort’s construction.

**The Historic Appearance of the Fort King Site Over Time**

Fort King was originally constructed in 1827 to implement the conditions of the Treaty of Moultrie Creek, which restricted Florida Indians to specified reservation boundaries and prohibited all but authorized persons from entering the reservation. Peter Mitchel drafted the earliest known map showing the location of Fort King sometime in the late 1820s or very early 1830s (see Figure 11). As part of the

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process of establishing the Public Land System in the newly formed Marion County, the Fort King Military Reservation was more precisely surveyed and mapped in 1844 in the northwestern quarter of Section 14, Township 15 South, Range 22 East (see Figure 12).

Several contemporary descriptions of the site are extant, and a few drawings of the fort survive as well. A drawing of the fort's layout presumed to date to 1827 depicts the stockade walls as 162 feet and 152 feet in length (see Figure 9). Front and rear gates are depicted on opposite sides of the fort, and two 14-foot square blockhouses were planned on opposite corners. Barracks, officers' quarters, kitchens, mess halls, and a munitions magazine are depicted inside the stockade. However, it seems that this depiction of the fort is merely a plan, and not an actual representation of Fort King as it was eventually constructed. This is documented by an 1836 drawing by Lieutenant Henry Prince in which the fort is depicted as an irregular pentagon (Laumer 1998:9) (see Figure 4).

Letters from Lieutenant J.W. Harris to Major General Thomas S. Jesup, written from Fort King during the summer and fall of 1832, mention several structures at the fort. These include a commissary and quartermaster's storehouse, sinks (privies), a hospital, a guardhouse, a sutler's store, stables, and a blacksmith's shop (Hunt and Piatek 1991:82-86). After the Seminoles burned Fort King in 1836, it was rebuilt in 1837. This second version of the fort was apparently built much like the original plan with blockhouses placed diagonally at two corners. Lt. John T. Sprague, first stationed at the fort in 1839, provided a sketch (see Figure 5) and a description of the fort.

We find ourselves comfortably in camp upon the extended plain west of Fort King and in full sight of it. Two companies of Dragoons are encamped in a semicircular form in our rear. Upon our left is a thick Hammock, and upon our right is an undulating pine barren, representing a cultivated park. Fort King is immediately in front. The Fort is upon an eminence [sic] overlooking the forrest [sic] that surrounds it, and its peculiar construction and its flag contrasting with the wilderness around, gives it quite a picturesque appearance. It is a picket work twenty feet high with a block house at each angle. In the center stands a two story building occupied by the soldiers, on top of which is a Cupola in which is posted a sentinel who announces the approach of man by ringing a huge Cow-bell; which to say the least is very unmilitary, but still very useful. The Commanding Officer's quarters are outside and many other buildings, such as wash rooms, bake house, guard tent and some officers tents. There are about sixty men stationed here (White 1956:161).

In August 1842, the Second Seminole War was declared terminated. In March 1843, the last troops were withdrawn from Fort King. In 1844, Fort King was designated the county seat of the newly formed Marion County. Small log buildings adjacent to the fort were used for residences, a new post office, a Methodist mission, and a general store. The two-story cupola-topped barracks became Marion County's first courthouse. In February 1846, the Fort King Military Reservation was opened for private land claims and sales. Shortly thereafter, the lumber and glass windows from Fort King were used in the construction of Ocala, the new seat of Marion County (Ott 1967:36-39).

In 1927, Cubberly (1927:152) described the Fort King site:

At the present time the site of Fort King is in part embraced in a farm, but traces of the stockade may be found. A faint sandy trail connects the historic spot with a

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paved highway not far away. Beautiful oak trees surround the pretty knolls on which the stockade stood. An old graveyard may be found; and nearby the spring from which the Fort and settlement obtained water still flows as in the days of Osceola.

An aerial photograph from 1955 (Hunt and Piatek 1991:199) demonstrates that the agricultural activities mentioned by Cubberly seem to have been limited to the approximate southwestern quarter of the proposed Fort King National Historic Landmark as well as a relatively narrow strip in the north-central portion of the tract.

In 1927, the Daughters of the American Revolution purchased a one-acre tract near the location of the two Fort Kings and erected a monument to honor those who died during the Second Seminole War (see Figure 13). This small parcel is located in the extreme southwestern portion of the Fort King tract. Although this parcel is known as the Fort King Burial Grounds, to date, no archaeological evidence has been recovered to support an interpretation of this area as a cemetery.

In 1942, the McCall family constructed a rectangular, south-facing, one story cement block residence in the south-central portion of the proposed Fort King National Historic Landmark (see Figures 3, 14, and 15). The McCall family maintained the agricultural use of previously mentioned farm fields. At some point, they also constructed a small swimming pool and undersized basketball court behind (to the north of) their house (see Figures 16 and 17). Circa 1970, they constructed an open shed or "pole barn" a little to the northeast of their residence (see Figure 18). Finally, circa 1991, they constructed a circular asphalt-paved driveway connecting S.E. Fort King Street to their residence (see Figures 3, 6, 14, and 15).

All of the discussed structures and features associated with the McCall family are still present on the Fort King tract, although the swimming pool is now overgrown. No portions of the property have been used for agriculture for at least the last 10 years. Former agricultural fields and/or pastures are now covered with dense thickets of secondary growth. The spring that provided fresh water for Fort King still flows and serves to fill a small pond located along the northeastern edge of the property (see Figures 3 and 10). Finally, some low density housing developments are now located near some of the edges of the proposed Fort King National Historic Landmark.

Thus, it is certain that some aspects of the current physical environment do not reflect the use of Fort King during the Second Seminole War and the period leading up to it. However, a number of aspects of the current environment are still reflective of the period of historic significance. For instance, the hill upon which the site is located remains relatively unchanged and is partially vegetated. The spring that served as the water supply for the fort is also still extant and is located on the edge of the property. Although some low-density housing is present along some of the edges of the Fort King site, the site itself is large and wooded enough to minimize the visual effects of these intrusions.

**Site Integrity**

*Archaeological Integrity:* No above-ground physical remains of Fort King are present. Archaeological remains exist in the form of artifact concentrations and subsurface features, such as postmolds, post fragments, refuse pits, and stockade trenches. As such, the Fort King site consists of the archaeological remains of two nineteenth-century U.S. military fortifications, various military and Seminole camps, and those outlying structures associated with the forts that have been located to date. The Fort King site has been subject to a number of natural and human processes that have impacted the archaeological record.

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Due to the natural slope of the property towards the streambed in the northern tract, down slope erosion has resulted in the displacement of some cultural material. Agricultural activity also was noted to the west of a fence line [REDACTED]. Re-vegetation of the area following agriculture and animal burrowing disturbed cultural materials as well (Ellis 1995:6).

The site has also been subjected to looting and artifact hunting. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Despite this activity, it is not believed that there has been a "profound loss of cultural information owing to the diffuse and deeply buried nature of the site contents (Ellis 1995:3)."

The vegetative cover on the top of the hill, where evidence indicates the forts were located, has protected the area from erosion (Ellis 1995:81). This area of the site, however, also has been subjected to agricultural activity. Piatek (1995c:214) notes that the property here, [REDACTED] was plowed to a possible depth of 18 to 24 inches. Nonetheless, Ellis' work has demonstrated that significant intact deposits and the buried remains of architectural structures remain preserved below the disturbed upper layers.

Thus, although there have been some impacts on the site affecting the archaeological record, the condition of the site remains good. Indeed, compared to other archaeologically investigated Seminole War sites, it contains the greatest abundance of intact subsurface features documented to date (Hellmann and Prentice 2000).

The archaeological resources at the Fort King site verify the existence of the fort. These resources retain high integrity, and contribute to NHL Criterion 1, for association with broad national themes, Criterion 2, for association with persons of national significance, and Criterion 6, for providing information of major scientific importance. Archeological resources are important for understanding the nationally significant events that occurred here and the broader themes of the Second Seminole War, Indian removal, military life during this period, and the colonization and settlement of this area of the United States.

*Aspects of Integrity:* The archaeological investigations of the Fort King site (Neill 1955; Gallant 1968; Ellis 1995; Piatek 1995b, c; Hunt and Piatek 1991; GARI 1998, 1999) provide ample evidence that both Fort King components are located in the proposed boundary. Evidence includes concentrations of artifacts typical of a military fort assemblage dating to the Fort King time period. Such artifacts include an abundance of wrought and cut nails, military buttons, liquor bottles and bottle fragments, ceramic sherds, and gunflints. The best subsurface evidence for the fort's location is in the form of postmolds and intact in-situ post fragments associated with the stockade walls of the fort. Burned materials indicative of the burning of the first Fort King in 1836 and refuse pits containing typical faunal remains from a frontier outpost, such as cattle, hogs, and wild game, also have been documented.

The setting of the Fort King site has been altered by several noncontributing properties. These include a 1920s stone monument (see Figure 13) located in the southwestern corner of the property, a small basketball court (see Figure 16), a swimming pool (see Figure 17), the McCall house (see Figures 3, 14), and associated "pole barn" (see Figure 18), all located in the south-central portion of the property, and the circular paved driveway that provides access to the house from S.E. Fort King Street (see Figure 15).

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However, other important aspects of the historic setting of Fort King are largely intact. The hill upon which the site is located remains relatively unchanged and is partially vegetated. The spring that served as the water supply for the fort is also still extant and is located on the edge of the property. Although some low-density housing is present along some of the edges of the Fort King site, the site itself is large and wooded enough to decrease the visual effects of these intrusions.

The historic contexts of the Fort King site are the Political and Military Affairs of the United States during the period of 1783–1860. The Fort King site is strongly associated with major themes related to this context, including Jacksonian democracy and the forced removal of American Indians to the newly established Indian Territory west of the Mississippi. U.S. removal agents used Fort King as a meeting place to present the details of removal to Seminole leaders. Here, the Seminoles and Black Seminoles made it clear that they were not willing to be removed. When deliberations failed, the Seminole removal agent, Wiley Thompson, and the commanding officer of Fort King were killed outside the fort walls. This was one of two simultaneous attacks, the other being Dade's Massacre, which mark the first day of the Second Seminole War, the longest and costliest struggle associated with Indian removal. Fort King was central to U.S. plans to end the conflict. It served as headquarters for several of the Florida commanders and more soldiers than any other fort associated with the war. At least one important Seminole leader, Halleck Tustenuggee, and his band were captured at the fort and shipped west to Indian Territory.

The Fort King site also is closely associated with the famous Seminole leader, Osceola. It was during the removal meetings at Fort King that Osceola was first recognized as an important leader by his own people, and especially by the U.S. military and government agents. His charismatic stand against removal led to his imprisonment at the fort. He eventually earned revenge and national fame and notoriety when he killed Andrew Jackson's Seminole removal agent at Fort King.

Although no above ground remnants of Fort King are extant, there is still some quality of association between the site and the Second Seminole War and Osceola. For instance, as described earlier, many of the natural features associated with the historic Fort King, such as the hill upon which the fort was built, the nearby spring that provided water for the fort, and the woods surrounding the fort, are still intact. It is probable that these natural features would allow a Second Seminole War resident or visitor to Fort King, such as Osceola, to identify the modern location of the Fort King site as the actual historic location of the fort. In combination with archeological remains, the site has the ability to convey its significance under Criteria 1, 2 and 6.

In summary, Fort King's significance is currently being argued in terms of Criterion 1, for association with important trends in U.S. history, in this case the Second Seminole War; Criterion 2, for association with the life of an individual important in the history of the U.S., in this case the life of Osceola; and Criterion 6, for the ability of the site to yield information of major scientific importance. As documented, the site is certainly the location of the historic Fort King. Although no visible above-ground features of Fort King are present, archeological information can provide an abundance of evidence with regard to the design, materials, and workmanship of the site during its period of significance. The setting of Fort King has been compromised somewhat by non-contributing resources, but not to the point that its association with the Second Seminole War and Osceola cannot be conveyed to a visitor to the site.

*Comparison of Fort King with Similar Properties:* In order to gain a better understanding of the integrity of the Fort King site, this section compares it with similar properties from Florida and elsewhere. Sites

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for comparison include other National Historic Landmark sites associated with the same themes as the Fort King site, sites in Florida related to the Second Seminole War, and sites related to the life of Osceola.

To begin with, there are several National Historic Landmarks associated with the related themes of Indian Removal, Jacksonian Democracy, Manifest Destiny, and Westward Expansion. Among these are New Echota, Hiram Masonic Lodge No. 7, the site of the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek, and Fort Mitchell. However, none of these are related to the Seminoles.

New Echota, located in Georgia, was the site of the Cherokee Nation capital. In New Echota, the Cherokees displayed more of the trappings of “civilization” than many of their American neighbors. However, under enormous pressure from American settlers, and with Jackson’s administration set firmly against them, they eventually conceded to move west. General Winfield Scott later established his removal headquarters at New Echota in 1838 (Levy 1973).

Hiram Masonic Lodge No. 7 and the site of the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek are both locations where southeastern Indian tribes signed important removal treaties. At Hiram Masonic Lodge No. 7 in Franklin, Tennessee, Chickasaw leaders signed the Franklin Treaty (Levy and McKithan 1973). A similar treaty was signed by Choctaw leaders at Dancing Rabbit Creek, in present-day Macon, Mississippi (Elliot and Barnes 1995).

Fort Mitchell, a National Historic Landmark located in present-day Phenix City, Alabama, was initially established in 1813 during the First Creek War. After the defeat of the Creeks by General Andrew Jackson, the fort was used by the military in attempts to protect the Creeks from American settlers. During the Indian Removal of the 1830s, Fort Mitchell was used to hold Creeks before they were removed west (McKithan and Barnes 1989). The Lower Creeks of Alabama and Georgia also put up some resistance in May 1836. Although the Treaty of Washington gave the Creeks the explicit right to stay on their lands if they so chose, American land speculators had been buying and moving onto their property since the treaty was signed. When they conducted a few reprisals against these technically illegal acts, General Jesup was called in. He captured most of the remaining Creeks, manacled them together, and sent them west of the Mississippi (Foreman 1953).

The various aspects of the Second Seminole War represented by Fort King help set it apart from these sites in other states that also are associated with the period of U.S. Indian Removal. One of the main distinctions is that Fort King represents not only the U.S. government’s Indian Removal policies, as seen through treaties or forts, but also native resistance to those policies.

There are also a few National Register sites and National Historic Landmarks associated with the Second Seminole War in Florida. Forts Cooper, Foster, and Pierce all saw limited action during the war and are listed in the National Register of Historic Places (Hellmann and Prentice 2000:64-66, 77), however the Fort King site has a higher level of integrity and documentation. The Dade Battlefield, site of Dade’s Massacre, is the other event that, with the events that occurred at Fort King on the same day, marked the beginning of the Second Seminole War. Dade Battlefield and the Okeechobee Battlefield, site of the Battle of Okeechobee, are both National Historic Landmarks. Although these battlefields have relatively good integrity, they represent a different property type associated with the Second Seminole War. Unlike battlefields, which often represent a single isolated event, field fortifications of the Second Seminole War were established to implement the conditions of treaties, such as the removal of Indian groups west, serve as collection points for Indians and their cattle, and become gathering

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points. Fort King also served as a headquarters for operations against Indians, as a location for negotiations between the government and various Indian bands and their leaders, and more generally, established a military presence in inland Florida. Additionally, field fortifications such as Fort King opened the inland territory to white settlement that had previously been confined to coastal areas. Military roads built to supply Fort King and other installations facilitated the movement of people through the territory. In addition to their rudimentary construction, this is a unique characteristic that only inland forts share (Hellmann and Prentice 2000:31, 69, 75).

Fort Brooke, established on Tampa Bay before the war began, was instrumental throughout the war's course as a supply point and garrison for many troops who saw action in the conflict. Its connection to Fort King via the Fort King Road allowed the two forts to be used in conjunction with each other as bases of operation and logistic centers. These two forts are considered by most researchers to be the sites most central to the origins and progress of the Second Seminole War (Hunt and Piatek 1991:1). Fort Brooke was also the point of embarkation for those Seminoles and Black Seminoles who were captured or surrendered during the war and were shipped west. Although evaluated as eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (Austin 1993:132), the Fort Brooke Reservation is now completely covered by development in downtown Tampa and is not currently on the National Register of Historic Places.

Fort King is still undeveloped and readily accessible to the public and future researchers. The fort certainly played a more pivotal role than any of the less active forts established during the conflict, such as Forts Cooper, Foster, and Pierce (Hellmann and Prentice 2000:59-69). Additionally, it represents a greater variety of aspects of the war than do any of the Second Seminole War battlefields.

Fort King is also one of the sites most intimately associated with Osceola, one of the most famous American Indian leaders in history. The most important events of the "productive period" of his life have been described as the several raids in the Alachua area before the official beginning of the Second Seminole War, the killing of Charley Emathla, the killing of Seminole Agent Wiley Thompson at Fort King, the First Battle of the Withlacoochee, the siege of Camp Izard, and an unnamed battle on March 31, 1836 with General Winfield Scott (Weisman 1989:127; Wickman 1991:33).

The raids led by Osceola and his followers in the Alachua area just prior to full warfare are for the most part undocumented archaeologically. Probable evidence for one of the biggest battles, the Battle of Black Point, has been collected by Earl DeBary, but as of the time of the writing of this nomination, a state site number had not been obtained (DeBary, personal communication 2001). The location of the site of Charley Emathla's killing will probably never be known precisely. The possible site of the First Battle of the Withlacoochee has been given the state site number, 8CI125, but has not received much professional archaeological inquiry (Weisman, personal communication 2001). The site of the siege of Camp Izard has been given the site number, 8MR2476. The battle with General Scott on March 31, 1836 has not yet been located and has received very little attention (Weisman, personal communication, 2001). It should also be noted that during these events, Osceola most likely made his permanent home at a site known as Powell's Town in the Cove of the Withlacoochee. The site of this village has received serious archaeological scrutiny from Dr. Brent Weisman (1989) and has been given the number, 8CI198, however, the site has been covered by major development. This site also is known as Wild Hog Scrub.

Additionally, the location of Osceola's capture under a flag of truce near Fort Peyton is currently a matter of conjecture (Knetsch, personal communication 2001). The place of Osceola's imprisonment in

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Florida, Fort Marion, otherwise known as the Castillo de San Marcos, is listed as a National Monument but in association with themes that are unrelated to his imprisonment or the Second Seminole War. Finally, Fort Moultrie, South Carolina, the location of Osceola's grave, is a National Monument as well, although mainly for its association with themes unrelated to the Second Seminole War. Certainly, this site is not associated with the "productive period" of Osceola's life.

Thus, a comparison of sites associated with Osceola indicates that Fort King reflects the place where he achieved significance. As discussed earlier, it was at Fort King that he first gained recognition from the U.S. military and government, as well as his own people, as an important Seminole leader vehemently opposed to U.S. removal efforts. It was also at Fort King that Osceola assassinated the Seminole removal agent, an act that helped trigger the Second Seminole War and brought Osceola national fame and notoriety.

*Summary of the Integrity of the Fort King Site:* Fort King is no longer standing. However, this is not unique. Only three structures associated with Second Seminole War military use, including the Fort Shannon Officers Barracks in Palatka, the Clark-Chalker House in Middleburg, and the Burned Blockhouse in Baker County, can be seen today in Florida. None of these sites are related to Osceola and none of them played as important a role in the history of the Second Seminole War and the issue of Indian Removal as did Fort King. Other sites associated with the Second Seminole War in Florida, such as Forts Brooke, Cooper, Foster, and Pierce are all similar to Fort King in that none have original above ground components that are visible. However, as detailed in this nomination, none of these sites played as important a role in the history of the Second Seminole War and Indian Removal as did Fort King, and none are related to the productive life of Osceola.

Because Fort King is no longer standing, the site does not possess several of the aspects of integrity utilized to evaluate a potential National Historic Landmark property. However, the importance of the Fort King site to the Second Seminole War and the larger theme of Indian Removal, as well as the relationship of the Fort King site with Osceola, has been demonstrated and can be studied further through archeological remains. The historic events that took place at Fort King are of transcendent importance in the nation's history. Further, the site is strongly associated with Osceola, a figure of transcendent importance in the nation's history. Finally, the association between Fort King and the Second Seminole War and the theme of Indian Removal, as well as the association of the site with Osceola is consequential. Therefore, the site of Fort King qualifies for National Historic Landmark Exception 3.

The Fort King site possesses integrity of location, association, setting, design, materials and workmanship. Archeological and historical research has shown conclusively that the Fort King site is indeed the location of the historic fort known as Fort King. Therefore, the Fort King site certainly has integrity of location. Also, although the setting of the Fort King site has been compromised somewhat by non-contributing resources, essential elements of the local environment are still in place. Enough of these elements, the hill upon which the site is located, the nearby source of freshwater, the surrounding woods, are present to allow the site to convey its association with the Second Seminole War and Osceola to a viewer. Again, it is felt that if Osceola were to visit the site today he would still recognize it as the historic location of Fort King despite the fact that no above ground structural elements remain. Finally, archeological information can provide evidence of design, materials, and workmanship of the site during its period of national significance.

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**Historical and Archaeological Investigations**

In the century or so after its final abandonment, the site of Fort King received little archaeological or historical research. In a historic site inventory compiled by the Florida Works Progress Administration in 1937 (WPA 1937), the site of Fort King was described as the “most important of the Military Posts maintained during the War with the Seminoles.” The site was eventually recorded as 8MR60 in the Florida Archaeological Survey master site file in 1954.

Table 1 presents information from previous investigations at the Fort King site. See Figure 19 for the locations of investigations at the Fort King site. See Figure 20 for the locations of auger and shovel tests excavated at the Fort King site.

*1953-1954 Neill Survey:* The first archaeological investigation of Fort King is attributed to Wilfred T. Neill who surveyed the area in 1953 and 1954. While most of Neill’s survey consisted of surface collections, Earl DeBary reports that Neill did conduct some limited shovel testing as well (Hellmann and Prentice 2000). The large number of historic artifacts (more than 1000) were described in Volume 23 of the Florida Historical Quarterly (Neill 1955) and consisted mainly of glass bottle fragments, ceramics, and some metal artifacts.

*1968 Bottle Cache Discovery:* Another early study of artifacts associated with Fort King occurred when a pine tree was toppled during Hurricane Gladys in 1968, exposing a large cache of stored bottles beneath its roots. The bottles were complete and carefully stacked upon each other (Gallant 1968). The bottles, approximately 130 in number and dating to the early nineteenth century, were collected by Gene Gallant and Ben Waller (GARI 1998). The bottles were described as an assortment of “old wine, champagne, whiskey and beer bottles” (see Figure 21). Earl DeBary (Hellmann and Prentice 2000) states that the location of the cache was very near the location of the Fort itself based on recent excavations in 1998 by Gary Ellis. DeBary also stated that many of the bottles recovered from the cache were stored in the McCall family garage, at least originally. According to Gary Ellis (1995:75), the bottles were divided between Gallant, Waller and the McCall family, with most of them given away as souvenirs. Gallant donated five of them to the Silver River Museum in Marion County.

It is also reported that a ground penetrating radar (GPR) unit was used in 1991 to survey the location of the bottle cache to identify any associated features. The GPR results indicated that “numerous subsurface anomalies, including . . . walls (Piatek 1995a:15)” were present.

*1989 Piatek Investigations:* The first intensive investigation of the Fort King site began in 1989 with a power auger survey of land that was part of the original Fort King Military Reservation, although the actual location of the fort was thought to be immediately south of the survey area. This northern tract of land, 14.73 acres, was purchased by Marion County in 1992 and is maintained by the city of Ocala. The goal of the survey was to determine the location of areas associated with the fort that could be archaeologically tested. The 8-inch diameter auger tests followed a grid pattern established at 30-foot intervals. Soil was screened through ¼-inch hardware cloth and the data recorded on forms for each test/grid location. If possible, local stratigraphy was noted for each auger test. A total of 444 auger tests were excavated and recorded. As a result, 631 artifacts were recovered. The assemblage included 322 postcontact artifacts consisting mostly of lithic debitage and an Alachua type knife, 292 precontact, and 17 modern (less than 50 years old) items.

The postcontact assemblage consisted mainly of glass (N=168), iron nails (N=71) (see Figure 22), and ceramics (N=35) (see Figure 23). There were also small numbers of other artifacts such as a pewter

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button, a leaded glass goblet fragment, a gunflint, an iron pot fragment, an ox shoe, five clay pipe bowl fragments, and nine clay pipe stem fragments (see Figures 24 and 25) (Piatek 1995b:104).

The results of the study indicated that postcontact artifacts were concentrated mainly in the southwestern corner of the survey tract. This concentration was attributed to its possible association with Fort King, which was thought to be immediately south of the study area.

*1991 Piatek Investigations:* In 1991, the McCall family allowed a power auger survey to be conducted on their property, which extends south of the 1989 survey area. The goal of this survey was to determine the actual location of Fort King. The field methods remained the same with the exception of the grid pattern, which was spaced at 25-foot intervals rather than 30-foot intervals (Piatek 1995c:170). A total of 1,494 auger tests were excavated and 917 artifacts recovered. The artifact assemblage consisted of 723 precontact, 127 postcontact, again consisting mostly of lithic debitage, and nine modern artifacts as well as 58 charcoal fragments (Piatek 1995c:180).

The postcontact artifacts included glass fragments (N=438), most of which were bottle fragments, cut nails (N=96), wrought nails (N=12), cut spikes (N=2), unidentified nails (N=26), and ceramic sherds (N=96). In addition, three iron buckle fragments, a Spanish half Real coin minted during the reign of Ferdinand VII (mint date 1810–1819), a gunflint, two clay pipe bowl fragments, and nine clay pipe stem fragments were also recovered (Piatek 1995c:181).

The distribution and density of artifacts normally associated with architectural features, such as nails, spikes, and flat glass, were examined for any patterns that would potentially indicate the locations of subsurface structural remains. Other artifactual data were used to identify any other postcontact and precontact components or meaningful cultural patterns (Piatek 1995c:178). Based on the results of the auger survey, the fort [REDACTED] Excavations were recommended to confirm the presence of archaeological features and support the hypothesized location.

*1994 Ellis Investigations:* In 1994, Ellis conducted a survey and excavation in the northern tract of the study area (Ellis 1995). This study was based on the findings of Piatek's investigation in 1989 in which he identified likely areas associated with Fort King as well as other postcontact and precontact components. The fieldwork was conducted in two phases. The first phase included a surface survey for exposed precontact and postcontact cultural features in addition to 184 shovel tests. This investigation incorporated the same grid pattern as that used by Piatek in 1989, which was 670 grid points set at 30-foot intervals. The selective placement of the 184 shovel tests was based on the results of the 1989 auger tests. Soil was double screened using various sizes of screens based on the nature of the deposit, usually half- and quarter-inch screens and eighth-inch for some samples. The shovel tests indicated that postcontact artifacts were concentrated in the western third of the study area closest to the McCall tract. Based on this investigation, researchers concluded that Fort King was most likely located in this western portion. The second phase of fieldwork consisted of the excavation of six 2m x 2m test units. Five of these tests were excavated near artifact clusters, and the other was excavated near a looter's pit.

According to Ellis, the earliest component identified in his work dated to the Late Archaic. A later precontact component was also identified, which Ellis attributed to the Cades Pond cultural tradition (Ellis 1995). An area with a high density of postcontact artifacts first identified in the 1989 survey was further tested, indicating the presence of an occupational component probably associated with the fort just south of the southwest corner of the study area. The postcontact artifacts were comprised mainly of

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bottle glass, iron nails, ceramics, and miscellaneous other types of European and U.S. made materials as well as one piece of Chattahoochee Incised pottery, an aboriginal ware associated with early Seminole culture. Forty-three post-contact, non-Seminole ceramic sherds were recovered. These include 20 whitewares, nine pearlwares, an ironstone, a mochaware, nine stoneware, and two earthenware.

As part of this study, the investigators used the glass sherds recovered from the site to derive a probable date range for the artifact assemblage associated with the postcontact component. Using a simple formula similar to South's (1977) mean ceramic dating method, Ellis (1995:78) derived a "Mean Glass Date" of 1841.6 from 136 olive colored and 53 aqua colored bottle sherds. This date is consistent with the occupation of Fort King and its surrounding area.

The results of the investigations conducted in 1989 and 1994 indicated that a considerable number of artifacts associated with the time period attributed to Fort King were concentrated in the southwestern portion of the study area.

*1998 Ellis Investigations:* Gary Ellis undertook the most extensive archaeological investigation associated with Fort King in 1998 within the McCall tract based on the findings of the earlier auger surveys, which indicated that the location of Fort King probably lay near the modern McCall residence. The purpose of the fieldwork was to test the results of the previous auger surveys, provide enough information for more extensive archaeological research, and provide the city of Ocala with enough evidence to justify a purchase of the McCall land in order to preserve the postcontact site. The fieldwork was conducted in three phases: (1) a reiterative metal detection in conjunction with surface survey and preliminary subsurface survey, (2) systematic and intensive shovel testing, and (3) block unit excavation (GARI 1998:2; GARI 1999).

The fieldwork began with a controlled surface survey and reiterative metal detection to observe and record the presence of exposed cultural materials. The survey followed grid lines established by the City of Ocala Surveying Department set at 25-foot intervals, producing over 500 grid points on the 24-acre tract (GARI 1998:22; GARI 1999). The area within each 25-foot square produced by the grid was metal detected to reveal the presence of building or equipment hardware indicative of activity areas and/or structural remains. Each 25-foot square was assigned a low, medium, or high rating based on the frequency of the metal items ("hits") encountered. Based on the results of this survey work and previous surveys, 40 shovel tests up to 1.5 meters deep were excavated to further guide the placement of units in the third phase of fieldwork. These tests also noted local soil conditions and the impacts of erosion, aeolian forces, agriculture, and bioturbation (GARI 1998:23; GARI 1999). The third phase of fieldwork began with designation of 31 2 x 5 foot excavation units "in areas producing evidence of contextual integrity" (GARI 1998:23; GARI 1999) (see Figures 26 and 27). Prior to beginning any excavation unit, the area of the planned unit was metal detected to note the presence of any possible concentrations of metal artifacts. Following this, the unit was excavated and the floor troweled to reveal any features.

The postcontact artifacts recovered included ceramics, glass, nails, buttons, buckles, and clay tobacco pipe fragments. Ceramic types consisted of whitewares, pearlwares (see Figures 28-32), creamwares, ironstone, mochaware, stoneware, and coarse earthenware. Clay pipe bowl fragments were also included as a subcategory of ceramics. The whitewares and pearlwares both had date ranges consistent with the occupation of the fort. Glass was represented mainly by large amounts of alcoholic beverage bottles, a pattern commonly associated with nineteenth century military sites. Various buttons identified as those in use by enlisted members of the infantry, artillery, and dragoons indicate a strong military presence. There were also a number of officers' buttons made from brass, pewter, and iron, types used

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by the army or militia from 1812 through the fort's period of military occupation (1827–1842). There were also a number of belt buckles and horse harnesses recovered, which were made of brass and iron. A brass haversack clasp eyelet was also included in this category. Eleven whole and partial gunflints were recovered (see Figure 33). A large number of nails, both wrought and cut, of various sizes were recovered in 1998. The nails were divided into three subcategories based on their size. The smallest were types consistent with those commonly used in the nineteenth century in the construction of furniture, cases, boxes, cabinets, and interior framing. The second and third subcategories included types consistent in size and form with nails used for the interior and exterior construction of buildings and walls such as the stockade. The large number of nails combined with the identification of architectural features was attributed to the construction of the first and second Fort King. This interpretation was supported by the presence of buttons and buckles associated with military uniforms and equipment. The types of ceramics and large number of alcoholic beverage bottles and bottle fragments are also consistent with a military site assemblage.

During Ellis' 1998 work, intact posts and subsurface features were identified in 24 (77%) of the 31 units excavated (GARI 1998; GARI 1999). Among these were 49 posts, several pit features, and several areas that Ellis interpreted as the remains of buildings, including "living floors" (GARI 1998; GARI 1999) (see Figures 34-40). Ellis (GARI 1998, 1999) argues that the historical documents, the concentration of early nineteenth-century artifacts, the presence of burned artifacts and posts, and the abundance of military paraphernalia dating to the 1830s, all point to the highest elevation of the McCall property as the location of Fort King. Further, Ellis (GARI 1998, 1999) concludes that the 49 postholes identified, as well as the other evidence for burned structures is "likely related to the first fort, 1827–1836."

### Site Analysis

The historical evidence concerning Fort King gathered to date clearly indicates that Fort King was located in the northwestern quarter of Section 14, Township 15 South, Range 22 East. More specifically, the records indicate that the Fort was located on a sandy hill next to a freshwater spring. The property currently known as the Fort King Tract is located in the northwestern quarter of Section 14, Township 15 South, Range 22 East. This property contains a high sand hill and a spring-fed freshwater pond (see Figure 3). Throughout the history of Marion County, local residents, historians, real estate agents, and community leaders have believed that this hill is the location of the historic Fort King and that the nearby pond and spring provided fresh water to those who were stationed or worked at the Fort.

The archaeological investigations conducted on the Fort King tract over the last 50 years have produced a great many glass, ceramic, and metal artifacts that overlap the period of use for Fort King (1827–1843). The types and distribution of these artifacts strongly indicate that Fort King was located within the current Fort King tract.

Nails dominate the metal artifact assemblage from the Fort King tract. Many of the nails consist of spikes and other large and medium duty types that are typically used for the fabrication and repair of large wooden structures. Such nails would be an expected component of an early to mid-eighteenth century fort, like Fort King. As detailed by GARI (1998, 1999), the distribution of these large and medium duty nails [REDACTED] As Ellis points out, it is important to note that hand-wrought nails have been recovered [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Wrought nails are generally dated to before [REDACTED]

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1800, although late examples of wrought nails have been recovered from sites dating to about 1830 (Adams 1995:94; Noble 1973:127; Ferguson 1977).

Another important component of the metal artifact assemblage consists of buttons. It is important to note that almost all of the buttons recovered from the Fort King tract to date, including all of the buttons recovered during the GARI (1998, 1999) excavations, are conclusively associated with military activity. They include buttons that would have been a standard component of artillery, dragoon, infantry, and officer uniforms during the time that Fort King was in use. [REDACTED]

The ceramic assemblage from the Fort King tract also has a military character heavily skewed towards mess/subsistence behaviors. The ceramics are generally of fairly high quality and are dominated by cream-bodied wares, especially variously decorated pearlwares. This would be an atypical ceramic assemblage for an archaeological site that had been the scene of sustained civilian activity. Instead, whitewares, ironstones, and coarser earthenwares, especially lead glazed redwares and inexpensive stoneware crocks and jugs, would be expected to dominate the ceramic assemblage of such a civilian site. By contrast, the Fort King tract contains a low density of domestic/utilitarian lead-glazed redware or salt-glazed stoneware, and few ironstones (GARI 1998, 1999). [REDACTED]

Several types of pearlware have been recovered from the Fort King site, including Hand-Painted (see Figures 28-29), Flow Blue (see Figure 30), Blue Banded (see Figure 31), Blue Shell-Edge (see Figure 32), and Transfer-Printed specimens. Hand-painted pearlware specimens are generally considered to have been produced between 1779 and 1840 (Hamilton 2002). Flow Blue pearlwares were most popular in the middle of the nineteenth century, particularly between 1825 and 1862 (Sutton and Arkush 1996:208; Hamilton 2002). The Banded pearlware specimens, often called "annular ware," recovered from the Fort King tract are almost exclusively Blue Banded. Blue Banded pearlware was manufactured from 1780 to 1830 (Grange 1977:70; Ferguson 1977). Blue Shell-Edge pearlware was produced from 1780 to the 1830s (Grange 1977:27-28, 70; Ferguson 1977; Hamilton 2002). The Transfer-Printed pearlware specimens recovered from the Fort King site are generally blue, most of which are Blue Willow. Dark Blue Transfer-Printed pearlware generally dates to between 1795 and 1840. Transfer-Printed pearlware in colors other than dark blue have a later range, generally spanning the period between 1818 and 1864 (Grange 1977:28, 70; Hamilton 2002). It is important to keep in mind that the terminal dates just given for the various types of pearlware recovered from the Fort King site cannot be seen as rigid terminus ante quem. It has been pointed out elsewhere that the "heirloom factor," usually considered to be about 50 years, must always be kept in mind. Thus, quite simply, early ceramics are sometimes recovered from later sites (Ferguson 1977). Only one pearlware sherd recovered from the Fort King site has a diagnostic maker's mark firmly dating its manufacture. The Lippert and Haas Company of Schlaggenwald, Germany, manufactured this specimen between 1832 and 1846 (GARI 1999:61).

Miscellaneous artifacts recovered from the Fort King site that indicate a Second Seminole War military presence include gunflints (see Figure 33), numerous unfired and fired lead balls and shot, gun picks, lead flint crimps, lead slag, sheet lead, lead bar, and lead military seals. In addition, a single 1838 U.S. Liberty seated half-dime was also recovered (GARI 1999:58-60).

During the most recent investigations of the Fort King tract (GARI 1998, 1999), intact burned posts and postholes in linear and semi-circular alignments [REDACTED]

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27 and 34-40). This evidence indicates that at least one structure was once located on top of this hill and that this structure was destroyed by fire. The possibly semi-circular alignments documented in a few of the GARI excavations should not be seen as negative evidence for Fort King, as the first Fort King apparently included several semi-circular or curved elements (see Figure 4). It is important to reiterate that the first Fort King was destroyed by fire. A similar alignment of stockade posts was documented for Fort Necessity in Pennsylvania (Hume 1968:185).

In summary, there is a great deal of evidence indicating that early- to mid-nineteenth century activity was focused on the top of the hill in the Fort King tract. The chronology of the artifacts recovered from this location is not inconsistent with the Second Seminole War. Similarly, the artifactual, architectural, and structural evidence recovered from this location is consistent with an interpretation of this location as the site of the two Fort Kings rather than the site of some sort of civilian activity. Archeology has revealed several pieces of the larger puzzle with regard to the locations of the first and second Fort King. Further research, particularly of the alignments, should connect those pieces for a better understanding of the structures that made up Fort King throughout the time it was occupied.

Based on the historical record, activity at the currently defined Fort King site consists of two separate building phases. These include a phase dating from 1827–1835, and another from 1837–1843.

*1827–1835:* In 1827, the U.S. military established a hastily constructed, irregularly shaped fortification on top of a hill of sand and clay in the southwestern quarter of the area currently defined as the Fort King site, 8MR60 (see Figure 4). Because this fortification was viewed only as a temporary military post, it was often referred to as “Camp” King or “Cantonment” King in the early years of its existence. At this time, structures at the fort included a commissary and quartermaster’s store, privies, a hospital, guardhouse, sutler’s store, stables, and a blacksmith’s shop.

The base was abandoned between 1829 and 1832. In 1832, the site was re-established as a military post and was mostly referred to as “Fort King” throughout the rest of its use. Sometime between the re-establishment of “Fort” King and the spring of 1835, the Seminole Indian Agency was moved from its original position one or two miles southwest to a location within approximately 100 yards of Fort King. By March 27, 1835, a council “platform” had been constructed somewhere in the vicinity of the newly relocated Seminole Agency and Fort King. This platform collapsed during a council with Seminole leaders on the same date.

The remains of another structure, indicated by puddled mortar and ash, may be located just to the west of the fort’s location (GARI 1999). It is probable that these features, whether associated with an actual structure or not, are associated with the re-establishment of Fort King in 1832. A letter from Lieutenant Joseph W. Harris from December of that year mentions his attempts to make lime by burning local specimens of limestone (Hunt and Piatek 1991:88).

On December 28, 1835, a band of Seminoles led by Osceola attacked and killed the Seminole Indian Agent Wiley Thompson and several others between the fort and the agency building, which most scholars consider the beginning of the Second Seminole War. In May 1836, the first Fort King was abandoned for the second time, and two months later, a group of Seminole Indians burned the fort.

Archaeological evidence from this first phase of Fort King consists of possible sections of the stockade walls of the fort, consisting of postmolds and sections of in-situ burned posts (GARI 1999). The location of the sutler’s store may be indicated by a bottle cache located down slope of the fort’s location,

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towards the southern boundary of the Fort King site, as it is currently defined (GARI 1999; Hellmann and Prentice 2000; Ellis, personal communication 2001). The historical, archaeological, and architectural evidence detailed previously strongly indicates that the summit of the hill on the Fort King tract is the location for the first Fort King. Based on the estimated dimensions of this structure, the footprint for the fort would have matched the top of the hill almost perfectly. Figure 45 presents a hypothetical overlay of the first Fort King on the summit of the hill on the Fort King tract (GARI 1999).

*1837–1843:* In April 1837, Fort King was rebuilt, most likely in the same location as the original fort. The newly established fort is pictured in Figure 5. This version of Fort King seems to have been better constructed and much more symmetrically shaped than the original, consisting of a stockade in the shape of a square with two diagonally placed blockhouses. A two-story barracks was located in the middle, while other buildings, including the Commanding Officer's quarters, washrooms, and a bakery, were located outside. On May 15, 1839, construction was completed on a circular council house located a short distance to the west of the fort. No archaeological features definitely associated with the second Fort King structures have been positively identified so far. There are indications that the council house may have been located on private property just to the west of the Fort King tract, as nails and other artifacts indicative of such a structure have been recovered by local collectors in this area (Ellis, personal communication 2001).

In 1843, Fort King was abandoned by the military. The next year, it became the county seat for the newly created Marion County. In 1846, the remains of the fort were sold, dismantled, and used in the construction of the nearby city of Ocala.

As discussed earlier, there is ample archaeological evidence indicating that both Fort Kings were located within the current Fort King tract. Recovered artifacts dating to this period include ceramics, glass, and metal items (Hunt and Piatek 1989, 1991; GARI 1999). The exact locations of several structures associated with the Fort, such as the "council platform" that collapsed during a council, the later council house, and the second Seminole Agency, have yet to be defined archaeologically and may be located on private property outside of the Fort King tract as it is currently defined.

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**8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

Nationally:  X  Statewide:  X  Locally:  

Applicable National

Register Criteria: A  x  B  x  C   D  x 

Criteria Considerations

(Exceptions): A   B   C   D   E   F   G  

NHL Criteria:

Criteria 1, 2, and 6  
Exception 3

NHL Theme(s):

I. Peopling Places  
6. Encounters, conflicts, & colonizationAreas of Significance: Ethnic Heritage-Native American  
Politics/Government

Period(s) of Significance: 1827–1843

Significant Dates: December 28, 1835

Significant Person(s): Osceola

Cultural Affiliation: Seminole, European American

Architect/Builder: N/A

Historic Contexts: V. Political &amp; Military Affairs, 1783–1860

G. Jacksonian Democracy

I. Cultural Developments: Indigenous American Populations

D. Ethnohistory of Indigenous American Populations

3. Varieties of Early Conflict, Conquest, or Accommodation

b. Forced and Voluntary Population Movements

1. The Establishment of Indian Territory

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**State Significance of Property, and Justify Criteria, Criteria Considerations, and Areas and Periods of Significance Noted Above.****Summary Statement of Significance**

Fort King was originally constructed in 1827 to implement the conditions of the Treaty of Moultrie Creek, which restricted Florida Indians to reservation lands and prohibited all but authorized persons from entering the reservation. Later, the U.S. Army's attempt to enforce the Payne's Landing Treaty of 1832, which required the Seminoles to give up their Florida lands and move west within three years, precipitated the Second Seminole War (1835–1842). Fort King played a central role in this war and was abandoned in 1843 after the war's conclusion.

The Fort King site is considered nationally significant under National Historic Landmark Criterion 1, association with events that represent broad national patterns, in this case the Indian Removal policies associated with Jacksonian Democracy. The Second Seminole War was the result of Andrew Jackson's Indian Removal policies and the Seminole and Black Seminole resistance to those policies. The war was the fiercest resistance launched by Native Americans against the Indian Removal Act. Tied to the conflict over Indian Removal in Florida was the issue of slavery. Over generations, Florida had been a "haven for fugitive slaves, -- or maroons" (Rivers 2000:189) who had escaped from the southern slave states into Florida's hinterlands. Many of them had become associated with the Seminoles.

Additionally, Fort King was the site of the killing of Andrew Jackson's Indian removal agent by the Seminole leader Osceola. This killing was one of two simultaneous Seminole attacks, the other attack taking place at the site known today as Dade Battlefield, also an NHL (1973), that mark the beginning of the Second Seminole War. Osceola gained national fame and notoriety through this action and thus, the Fort King site is also considered nationally significant under National Historic Landmark Criterion 2, association with the lives of persons nationally significant in U.S. history, in this case, Osceola. In addition to the killing of the Seminole removal agent, it was during removal councils held at Fort King prior to the Second Seminole War that both his people and the government agents first recognized Osceola as a leader.

Finally, Fort King is considered nationally significant under National Historic Landmark Criterion 6, for having yielded and being expected to yield information of major scientific importance and shedding light upon periods of occupation in this area of the United States. Archeological investigations at the Fort King site have revealed artifactual, architectural, and structural features that not only indicate that this is the location of Fort King, but also can, through the study of these features, provide significant, specific information about the events that occurred there as part of the Second Seminole War, such as the burning of the fort by the Seminoles, the location of the guardhouse where Osceola was imprisoned, the place where the Indians camped, and the location of the killing of the removal agent by Osceola. Additionally, unlike other fort sites associated with the Second Seminole War, the Fort King site is large and fairly intact, making it rare if not unique in this respect. Data from excavations may provide information about forts as instruments of settlement in the United States during this period, information about cultural interaction and exchange between American Indians, African Americans and European Americans, and information for improving our understanding of lifeways at a military installation of this era.

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**FORT KING AS A NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK****Applicable National Historic Landmarks Criteria**

Fort King is eligible for National Historic Landmark status based on National Historic Landmark Criterion 1, association with broad, national patterns or themes of United States History; Criterion 2, important association with persons nationally significant in United States History; and Criterion 6, the potential to provide information of major scientific importance about this area of the United States and about the events that took place at Fort King.

Under Criterion 1, the Fort King site is strongly associated with the origins and progress of the Second Seminole War, part of the broader themes of Indian Removal and Jacksonian Democracy, Manifest Destiny, and Westward Expansion. In 1820, 125,000 American Indians were living east of the Mississippi. Under the auspices of the Indian Removal Act, President Andrew Jackson and his predecessors removed most of the American Indians living east of the Mississippi over the course of the next several decades. Most of the American Indian groups affected by the Indian Removal Act protested vehemently, but under enormous pressure, eventually agreed to remove peacefully. A few tribes used force to resist removal. However, by 1844, the Native population east of the Mississippi had already been reduced to 30,000, almost all of which were living in undeveloped areas adjacent to Lake Superior (Rogin 1975:4).

As mentioned, although almost all of the American Indians affected by the Indian Removal Act eventually removed peacefully, there were a few exceptions. For instance, over the course of a few months spanning the latter half of 1831 and the early portion of 1832, Black Hawk, leader of the Fox and Sac, led approximately 2,000 of his people who wanted to reoccupy their traditional lands in northern Illinois. After a short but bitter war in Illinois and Wisconsin, Black Hawk's people were forced to retreat west of the Mississippi River, in compliance with the 1830 Indian Removal Act. Once there, they were slaughtered by their Sioux enemies (Wallace 1970).

But, of all the tribes affected by the Indian Removal Act of 1830, the Seminoles put up the fiercest resistance. The Second Seminole War was the longest Indian war in which the U.S. was involved (Hunt and Piatek 1989:1). In fact, the only U.S. military conflict that lasted longer was the Vietnam War (Brown 1983:454). The Second Seminole War was also the most expensive Indian war, costing the government and American settlers an estimated \$30 to \$40 million in expenses and property damage. American deaths numbered 1,466 regulars, 55 militiamen, and almost 100 civilians. Most of these deaths, especially for the combatants, were the result of disease and other hardships rather than wounds suffered in battle. In the end, more than 4,000 Seminoles and Black Seminoles were removed west of the Mississippi with approximately 600 Seminoles remaining in Florida.

Fort King was central to the origins of the Second Seminole War. It initially served as an important military post on the edge of the Seminole Reservation in order to provide protection and security to the inhabitants of Florida. When, under Jackson's presidency, the U.S. policy concerning the Seminoles changed from one of containment to one of removal, Fort King served as a council site to work out the details. At these councils, the Seminoles expressed their opposition to the removal plan. Osceola's eventual killing of Seminole removal Agent Wiley Thompson at Fort King is one of the two attacks that mark the beginning of the war. As discussed, the fort played an important role throughout most of this conflict. It eventually became the headquarters for the Army of the South in 1840. The capture of Halleck Tustenuggee at Fort King in 1842, after the Seminole leader accepted what he thought was a

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friendly invitation, is representative of the treachery employed by Florida commanders late in the war to achieve the goal of removal. In contrast, Fort King was also the site of an important council late in the war between Major General Alexander Macomb and Seminole leaders that resulted in a new reservation for the Seminoles. When Colonel Worth eventually declared the Second Seminole War over in 1842, he informed the few Seminoles remaining in Florida that they must remain within the bounds of this new reservation (see Figure 46) (Mahon 1985; Covington 1993:72).

Under Criterion 2, the Fort King site is strongly associated with the productive life of the famous American Indian leader, Osceola. During Agent Thompson's removal councils at Fort King, Osceola first came to be noticed by Americans as a force with which to be reckoned. It is also in these councils that Osceola, after trying to operate behind the scenes, finally assumed more of a leadership role among his own people. Thompson's imprisonment of Osceola at Fort King was an insult to the Seminoles that Alligator, the Tallahassee chief, later cited as one of the main grievances that led the Seminoles to open conflict with the military. Finally, Osceola's killing of Agent Thompson outside of Fort King was one of two simultaneous attacks that marked the beginning of the Second Seminole War, the "crossing of the Rubicon" for the Seminoles in their dealings with the U.S. government. After this attack and the simultaneous destruction of Dade's troops on their way to Fort King, retaliation and forced removal efforts by the U.S. were inevitable. As a result, Osceola's name became known throughout the nation.

At Fort King, the three most populous races of the nation at the time spoke to each other in unmistakable terms. Here, the dominant Anglo-American population made clear its view of American Indians: they were expected to turn over their lands for American "progress" and the good of the nation. If they did not, any means necessary would be used against them. The Seminoles and Black Seminoles must be removed from the South so as not to provide a safe haven for enslaved African Americans who escaped or provide inspiration and support for insurrection among the enslaved African American population.

The Seminole Indians' attitude towards U.S. removal plans was reiterated many times: they were not willing to leave their homes. Although ignored in the initial councils at Fort King, the Seminoles made their voices heard through the killing of Agent Thompson at the Fort and during the ensuing Second Seminole War. Black Seminoles, by fighting American soldiers, made clear they did not want to be enslaved by whites again.

Under Criterion 6, research on the military component of the Fort King site has the potential to yield important information on the design details of both Fort Kings. The identification of architectural and structural details such as post holes and nails provide important information about the orientation of the fort and its associated structures. Combined with the landscape details still present at the site today, it is possible not only to envision the layout of the fort during its period of national significance, but also to identify specific locations essential for conveying the national significance of the site. For instance, the identification of postholes in relation to other features may help identify the location of the killing of Agent Thompson by Osceola. This action made Osceola a nationally recognized figure and, along with the Dade Massacre, was the catalyst for the war. Burned artifacts also indicate an important event, the burning of the fort by the Seminoles in 1836.

Compared to other Second Seminole War sites, Fort King contains the greatest wealth of intact subsurface features and artifacts presently documented (Hellmann and Prentice 2000:58). It has long been recognized that the archeological record can provide important information about cultural

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interaction and exchange. At Fort King we find a unique situation in which European Americans, African-Americans and American Indians not only interacted at council sites, but lived and worked in close proximity for a number of years. It has been noted that the Seminole Agency and Fort King were established well before the Second Seminole War, thus, this area had long been a location where these diverse groups have come together. Some of the broader nationally significant research questions identified by Hellmann and Prentice (2000:78, 79) include the following:

- 1) As a major frontier fort and base of operations during the Second Seminole War, how were the lives of troops and officers stationed there similar to or different from more remote, smaller outposts?
- 2) What was the nature and to what extent did the occupants at Fort King interact with the Seminoles, Black Seminoles, and escaped enslaved Africans and African Americans during the prewar years (1820s) and during the period of the fort's national significance? At what levels can we understand cultural interaction and exchange between these groups? At what level can we understand acculturation between these groups?
- 3) To what extent did those stationed at Fort King, both before and during the Second Seminole War, rely on locally available foods (e.g., gardening, hunting, and fishing) compared to government issued rations?
- 4) Since the preservation of floral remains at open-air archeological sites is commonly limited to carbonized (burned) materials, did the burning of the first Fort King in 1836 preserve a wealth of floral evidence not normally recovered at unburned sites?
- 5) What medical prescriptions were employed during the time leading up to the abandonment of the fort in 1836 due to epidemic disease, and was frontier medicine different from standard medical practices at the time?
- 6) Are the patterns of architectural nail use identified by Ellis at Fort King similar to those found at other forts, and are they appreciably different from nail patterns found at contemporary domestic sites?
- 7) Is the historic ceramic assemblage present at the site in any way different from contemporary domestic assemblages, and if so, what might account for the differences?
- 8) Presumably, a military installation would exhibit an artifactual assemblage dominated by items and patterns reflecting male-related behaviors. Do patterns of male-related behaviors exhibited at Fort King find analogs at contemporary non-military, domestic sites in the region?

**National Historic Landmarks Criteria Exception**

National Historic Landmarks Criterion Exception 3 is applicable to the Fort King site. Under this Exception, the site of a building or structure no longer standing would qualify if the person or event associated with it is of transcendent importance in the nation's history and the association is consequential. Although ample archaeological evidence has been collected to identify the Fort King site as the actual location of the Second Seminole War fort known as Fort King, no above ground remnants of the fort are visible. However, as documented in this nomination, Fort King has highly significant associations with the Second Seminole War, the longest, most deadly and costly conflict

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associated with Andrew Jackson's Indian Removal Act. Further, the site of Fort King is also strongly associated with Osceola, one of the major figures in American Indian history.

Finally, archeological information provides ample evidence of the landscape, layout, and configuration of Fort King during its period of significance. Combined with the current landscape features as they exist today (e.g., the location of the spring and slope toward the fort site, current vegetation, etc.), a clear picture of the fort during its period of national significance can be envisioned and interpreted. Other archeological information such as evidence of the burning of the fort and specific locational information with regard to nationally significant events which occurred here can be gathered and ultimately heighten the ability of the fort site to convey its national significance.

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

Although the Fort King site is not currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places, it is eligible under Criteria A, B, and D. It is eligible under Criterion A for its association with the broad national pattern of Indian Removal, under Criterion B for its association with the life of the significant Seminole leader, Osceola, and under Criterion D for the scientific potential that all components of the site possess.

Archaeological investigations (Piatek 1995b:103; Piatek 1995c:180; Ellis 1995:60; GARI 1998:31) have indicated that there are several precontact American Indian components present at the Fort King site (see Figure 48). These include a Late Archaic period (ca. 2300–500 BC) component, a Cades Pond Weeden Island-related (ca. AD 100–600) component, and an Alachua (AD 600–1700) component. These resources are eligible at the state level. Important research questions that can be addressed in research on the precontact components of the Fort King site include the transition from foraging to horticulture and/or agriculture between the Archaic and Cades Pond periods. Also, as the Fort King site is located at the margins of several archaeological culture areas, further research at the site could help determine to which of these cultures, if any, the formative material culture at the Fort King site belongs. Finally, the repeated occupations of the Fort King site from the Archaic through the formative period can offer important insight into how precontact societies adapted to the changing environment at the Fort King site (Hellmann and Prentice 2000:79).

Archaeological investigations have also identified structural and artifactual features most likely related to the early post-military use of the Fort King site as the seat of Marion County (GARI 1999). These cultural remains associated with the Fort King site are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion D within the state context of Florida's Territorial Period. Important themes related to this context that apply to the Fort King site include politics and settlement. The post-military component of the Fort King site has sufficient integrity to retain meaningful association among artifacts and natural features and thus has the potential to provide important information about the establishment, early settlement, and expansion of Marion County and the City of Ocala at the local and state levels of significance.

**JACKSON'S INDIAN REMOVAL POLICY**

This section provides background information for an understanding of how Fort King meets National Historic Landmark Criterion 1, association with broad national patterns of U.S. history; Criterion 2, association with the lives of persons nationally significant in U.S. history; and Criterion 6, information of major scientific importance and periods of occupation in the United States. To this end, a brief

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summary of the broad national patterns of Jacksonian Democracy and Indian Removal are provided. Background information is then provided on how Indian Removal policies were specifically applied to the Seminoles. Finally, early biographical information on Osceola is provided.

**American Indian Removal Policies and Jacksonian Democracy**

The idea of “Indian Removal,” the transference of American Indians to areas outside the borders of the United States, can be traced back to the beginning of the nation. Early U.S. leaders viewed native presence within the bounds of the new nation as a military threat that might be exploited by foreign governments. They also wanted to obtain native lands for settlement and industry. As early as the presidency of George Washington, there was talk of creating a “Chinese wall” to keep the American Indians and their new Anglo-American neighbors separate. Thomas Jefferson used tribal treaties as a means to provide land for the expansion of American frontiers as well as to separate the Indians from contact with British and Spanish colonial trading influences in Florida and Louisiana (Clark and Guice 1989:31, 32, 36). After the purchase of Louisiana from France, Jefferson hoped that a portion of it could be used to lure American Indians from lands further east (Binder 1968; Satz 1975). To encourage such migration, he supported the use of government-sponsored trading factories in native lands to encourage debt among them “beyond their individual means of paying” because, “whenever in that situation, they will always cede lands to rid themselves of debt (Bergh 1907:349-350).” Similar measures were considered by James Madison in order to alleviate tensions following the War of 1812 and were proclaimed as national policy by James Monroe in 1825. John Quincy Adams recommended exchanging eastern native lands, on a voluntary basis, for lands west of Arkansas and Missouri (Satz 1975).

During this early period (1789–1829), the United States obtained lands from American Indians mainly through treaties. These treaties were brokered through various combinations of bribery, deception, threats of force, and actual force. The acknowledgement of tribal sovereignty in the formal purchases of lands allowed the government to justify the dispossession of the American Indians. Thus, the public’s demands for native land were placated in ways that did not impugn the honor of the nation. American Indians generally responded to increasing American movement west by moving further west themselves. This helped to justify one of the main assumptions of American Indian policy at this time, “that the eastern tribes would continue to relinquish their land at approximately the same rate that whites demanded it (Satz 1975:2).”

However, by the 1820s the Cherokees and other tribes, especially from the southeast, began to assert that tribal sovereignty gave them the right to stay in their homelands without ceding further lands to the United States. Although this position received great sympathy and support from many U.S. citizens, particularly in New York and New England, overall, public support was mainly on the side of Indian removal (Satz 1975).

After Andrew Jackson’s victory in the election of 1828, he moved quickly to make good on his campaign pledge to remove eastern tribes to lands west of the Mississippi River. To this end, he and his supporters made passage of the Indian Removal Act one of their top priorities. The Removal Act, signed into law by Jackson on May 28, 1830, provided the president with the congressional sanction and the necessary funds to carry out his relocation plan. The Jackson administration began immediately by negotiating a removal treaty with the Choctaws, the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek, then quickly turned its attention to other eastern tribes. By the end of Jackson’s second term, the United States had ratified nearly 70 removal treaties and acquired approximately 100,000,000 acres of native land in exchange for approximately 32,000,000 acres of land west of the Mississippi. Most

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tribes removed fairly peacefully, usually after intense treaty negotiations, but the Seminoles of Florida were a notable exception (Satz 1975). Led by Osceola, the Seminoles objected to and resisted removal, eventually leading to the Second Seminole War.

**Indian Removal and the Seminoles**

*The Origins of the Seminoles:* It is estimated that by 1710, the native Florida aboriginal groups had been almost completely exterminated as a result of disease, British sponsored slave raids, and outright warfare with mostly Creek and Yamasee Indians. The most damaging blow to aboriginal groups was the destruction of the Spanish mission system by Creek warriors and a small group of British colonists under the direction of British commander Colonel James Moore in 1704 (Swanton 1922; Hann 1988). Realizing that almost all of Florida outside the walls of St. Augustine was virtually deserted, and therefore indefensible, the Spanish persuaded groups of mostly Lower Creeks to immigrate from Alabama and Georgia to northern and central Florida. Throughout most of the first half of the 1700s, small groups of other Creeks and related southeastern Indians from Alabama and Georgia continued to migrate to Spanish Florida. By 1765, many of these new settlers were considering themselves as separate from their ancestors and relatives outside of Florida. Apparently, European colonists had also come to recognize them as independent and had begun to use the term “Seminole” to describe them. This term was a Muskogee word, *simanó-li*, taken originally from the Spanish word, *cimarrón*, for “wild” or “runaway” (Sturtevant 1971:100-105).

On March 27, 1814, the Creek War (1813–1814) in Alabama Territory was brought to an end with General Andrew Jackson’s crushing defeat of the Red Stick Creeks at the Battle of Horseshoe Bend. On August 9, 1814, Jackson imposed the severe Treaty of Fort Jackson on the Creeks, which forced them to cede two-thirds of their land. The most militant surviving Creeks chose to “redeploy” in the territory of Florida. By the early 1820s, nearly two-thirds of the native Florida population consisted of recent refugees from the Creek War who had merged with the original Seminoles (Mahon 1985:6-7; Steele in Pepe, Steele and Carr 1998:51-52).

The events of the First Seminole War (1816–1818) made it clear that the American Indians residing in Florida were no longer allied to their Creek ancestors still residing mostly in Alabama. During this conflict, “friendly” Creeks allied themselves with American troops under the command of General Andrew Jackson in a campaign against Seminoles, Red Sticks, and Blacks in northern Florida (Covington 1993:41-49). The result of this war was the transfer of Florida from Spain to the United States in 1821 and the appointment of Andrew Jackson as the first Territorial Governor. Almost immediately after the transfer, the U.S. began to negotiate with the Florida Indians as Seminoles and a group separate from the Creeks (Sturtevant 1971:107).

*The Treaty of Moultrie Creek:* Recognizing the threat that the militant native population posed to American settlement, William Duval, Florida’s second Territorial Governor (1822–1834), was the first public official to suggest removing the Seminoles west of the Mississippi. President Monroe agreed, although he suggested the possibility of confining the Seminoles to a smaller area within Florida as an alternative. The result was a council held at Moultrie Creek, near St. Augustine, in September 1823 between the Seminoles and agents appointed by Monroe’s Secretary of War, John C. Calhoun. The Treaty of Moultrie Creek stipulated that in return for relinquishing almost 24 million acres of land, “that the government could sell at \$1.25 an acre, the Seminoles received moving expenses; an annuity of \$5,000 for twenty years; food for a year; payment for improvements left behind in northern Florida; provision for a school, [a] blacksmith, and gunsmith; farming implements; livestock; and employment of an agent, subagent, and interpreter” (Covington 1993:52, 53). However, the annuities promised

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were withheld for a period of time to pay property owners for losses through theft and enslaved Africans and African Americans who had runaway (Covington 1993:53).

The treaty also created several reservations for the Florida Indians and prohibited all but authorized non-Indians from entering them. The small, northern reservations were located on the Apalachicola River and were reserved mostly for Lower Creek bands that had aided Jackson in the First Seminole War and the Creek War. The southern reservation consisted of approximately 4,000,000 acres and was roughly triangular in shape. An important element of the treaty was that this reservation restricted the Seminoles to interior regions, thereby cutting off their access to the Gulf and Atlantic coasts (see Figure 46). Using modern cities for reference, the southwestern point of the reservation was located to the east of Tampa Bay, the southeastern point to the west of Fort Pierce, and the northern point a little above Ocala (Francke 1977:3; Mahon 1985: *Map of Florida*; Hunt and Piatek 1991:3). The southern border of the reservation was described as lying just to the north of “Charlotte’s River,” or Peace River (Mahon 1985:39).

This reservation, although much larger than the Apalachicola reservations, was considered one of the worst in Florida (Mahon 1985:29-50; Covington 1993:50-60; Steele in Pepe, Steele and Carr 1998:54; Hellmann and Prentice 2000). After surveying the reservation in January 1826, Governor Duval admitted that: “the best of the Indian Lands are worth but little: nineteen twentieths of their whole country is by far the poorest and most miserable region I have ever beheld” (Lowerie and Franklin 1834:663-664). By January 1827, Oren Marsh, a member of a party appointed by Duval to evaluate Seminole improvements (Covington 1993:57), reported about life on the reservation:

The situation of these people is truly deplorable at present, in consequence of the loss of their crops last season, and the difficulty of obtaining their natural means of subsistence: game, of every description, it is very difficult to be found in the nation...

...The Chiefs of the Nation are also, particularly distressed at this time, on account of the disobedience of a great portion of the Mickasukee tribe, who have been absent from the nation nearly a year, and who seem determined not to return to their limits; several of the emigrant Chiefs (but not those of the Mickasukee tribe), have been traveling night and day, in search of these abandoned wretches, for the purpose of persuading them to return, while their own families have been starving at home, but have not been able to succeed in getting any into the nation, or but a few of them (National Archives, Document 0019-0021).

Reservation conditions were a main source of tension leading up to Indian resistance. Gad Humphreys, a Seminole ally, was appointed Indian Agent to the Seminoles in 1822 and was requested to construct a Seminole Indian agency in the southern reservation at the “center of the Indian population where good land and water may be found” (Carter 1958). He did so in 1825 at a location somewhere in present-day, northeastern Ocala (Cubberly 1927:141-142; Mahon 1985:63; Hunt and Piatek 1991). Almost from the beginning, companies of U.S. troops set up temporary posts near the agency as a result of increasing tensions between the Seminoles and American settlers nearby (Mahon 1985:63-64). One such early post was named “Camp McKinney” (see Figure 47). In 1827, Camp/Cantonment/Fort King was constructed approximately a mile or two from the agency in the northern portion of the main Seminole reservation (see Figures 11 and 46). The camp and fort were

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named for Colonel William King, commander of the Fourth Infantry of Florida (Mahon 1985:66). Colonel Duncan L. Clinch described the importance of Fort King's location the year it was established:

From my knowledge of the Indian Character, I Consider this post of more importance, in Controuling (sic) the Indians, and in giving protection and Security to the inhabitants of Florida, than any other post in the Territory, as it is in the immediate vicinity of the largest number of the Florida Indians, and between them and the white inhabitants (Carter 1958:856-858).

Clinch's concerns were well founded as hungry Seminoles dissatisfied with the main reservation were slow to relocate, and even more reluctant to stay within their new boundaries. Conflicts with American settlers were common. Occasionally, killings were perpetrated by members of both sides.

Besides the obvious tensions concerning physical space and food, the presence of African Americans, some of whom were formerly enslaved Africans and African Americans who had escaped and lived among the Seminoles, was a major source of conflict with American settlers. This had been an issue since the Second Spanish period of Florida. For instance, the presence of large numbers of African Americans among the Seminoles, and the refuge both provided to fugitives who were enslaved, was a major reason for the "Patriot's War" of 1812–1816. During this precursor to the First Seminole War, Americans attempted to wrest control of Florida from the Spanish, in part by crushing Seminole support (Davis 1930-1931:155; Klos 1995:128).

The presence of Africans and African Americans among the Seminoles continued to infuriate southerners and led to the First Seminole War (1817–1818) (Klos 1995:128). The United States acquired Florida in the treaty signed with Spain at the end of this conflict in 1821. It was hoped that acquisition of the territory would eliminate its use as "a haven for escaped slaves, a trapdoor in the bottom of the nation through which they could drop out of Alabama and Georgia and land in freedom (Laumer 1995:15)."

However, by 1822, John R. Bell, Acting Agent for the Indians in Florida, estimated that there were at least 5,000 Seminole Indians in the territory along with approximately 300 Seminole slaves (Carter 1956:463-465). Throughout the next decade, southern slave-owners sent numerous complaints to Agent Gad Humphreys, Governor Duval, and several Secretaries of War and Presidents, claiming the presence of enslaved African American fugitives among the Seminoles (Hunt and Piatek 1991; Mahon 1985; Covington 1993; Klos 1995:140). The following proceedings of a meeting held by citizens of Alachua County on January 23, 1832 is typical of the fears and complaints of southerners as a whole:

Whereas it having been ascertained that there are exceeding 1600 Warriors & over 1100 Slaves (belonging to the Indians) now residing in the Seminole Indian Nation many of whom are traversing the County adjoining the Northern Boundary of the Indian Nation and it having been estimated that there are a larger proportion of slaves than white persons owned by the citizens of said county residing within 30 miles of said Northern Boundary, and Whereas an armed force is deemed requisite to protect the Citizens of said County from aggressions by the Indians or attempts of an insurrection among the slaves, in which case no assistance could readily be obtained from the two Companies stationed at Cantonment Brooke

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Tampa Bay owing to it being 112 miles distant from said Northern Boundary & 100 miles distant from the Seminole Agency

Therefore Be it resolved that a Committee of three be appointed to draft a Memorial to the President of the United States respectfully requesting him to direct that a Company of U.S. Troops be ordered from Cantonment Brooke or some other station to Camp King near the Seminole Indian Agency (Carter 1959:643-644).

The Seminoles for their part in the 1820s and early 1830s returned enslaved African Americans who were fugitives to their purported masters in ever increasing numbers. However, southern slave-owners claimed that they held back many more (Klos 1995:140). The growing clamor over this issue eventually cost Seminole Agent Gad Humphreys his job. Recently elected President Andrew Jackson, always sympathetic to southern complaints about Indians and enslaved African Americans who were fugitives, relieved him of the position in 1830 (Mahon 1985:70-71).

*The Treaties of Payne's Landing and Fort Gibson:* With the departure of Humphreys, the Seminoles probably lost their most effective American ally. This was much to their misfortune, as their situation became more difficult with each passing month. Complaints from southern slave-owners continued to mount. Further, the inadequate resources of their main reservation forced many Seminoles to leave its boundaries, leading to even more conflicts with the local Florida citizenry. Their predicament was summarized well by the Florida Legislative Council in 1832:

The Treaty of 1823 [Moultrie Creek] deprived them of their cultivated fields and of a region of country fruitful of game, and has placed them in a wilderness where the earth yields no corn, and where even the precarious advantages of the chase are in a great measure denied them.... They are thus left the wretched alternative of Starving within their limits, or roaming among the whites, to prey upon their cattle. Many in the Nation, it seems, annually die of Starvation; but as might be expected, the much greater proportion of those who are threatened with want, leave their boundaries in pursuit of the means of subsistence, and between these and the white settlers is kept up an unceasing contest (Mahon 1985:73-74).

This summary was not sent to Congress in support of the Seminoles, but rather as part of a petition calling for their removal west. Andrew Jackson had already signed the Removal Act into law, and the citizens of Florida, as with many other southern states, were more than ready for it to be applied.

As a result, President Jackson eventually sent James Gadsen back to Florida to negotiate another treaty with the Seminoles. Gadsen was instructed to convince the Seminoles to remove to lands west of the Mississippi and live next to the Creeks already there. Negotiations began in May at a place known as Payne's Landing, located on the Oklawaha River a few miles from the present-day small town of Eureka. Because Gadsen left no notes of the negotiations, it is almost impossible to ascertain what really occurred at Payne's Landing. Eventually though, a small contingent of Seminole leaders signed the Treaty of Payne's Landing on May 9, 1832. In summation, the treaty established that a delegation of Seminole leaders was to visit the lands chosen for them and the Creeks west of the Mississippi. If the Seminoles were satisfied with this land, they were to remove to it and then be considered part of the Creek nation. This meant that once in their new home, the government would no longer deal with them as a separate entity (Mahon 1985:75-85). In October 1832, a Seminole delegation consisting of

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seven leaders left for Arkansas with the new Seminole Agent, John Phagan. Again, there is little direct evidence of what occurred during negotiations. All seven of the Seminoles are reported to have signed the Treaty of Fort Gibson on March 28, 1833, stating Seminole approval of both the land and the government's removal plan (Mahon 1985:82-85).

President Jackson replaced Phagan with Wiley Thompson late in 1833. Thompson had gained Jackson's attention as a Congressman from Georgia when he spoke in favor of Indian removal. As the new Seminole Agent, Thompson's mandate was clear: he was to enforce the Treaties of Payne's Landing and Fort Gibson and serve as the "superintendent of emigration" for the Seminoles (Laumer 1995:115). On Christmas Eve, 1833, nine months after the signing of the Treaty of Fort Gibson, President Jackson submitted it and the earlier Treaty of Payne's Landing to the Senate for ratification. Both were unanimously accepted in April 1834 (Mahon 1985:82-85).

**Osceola**

Osceola was born in Tallassee, an Upper Creek town in Alabama around 1804. His mother was a native Creek but his father was an Englishman named William Powell. Because of this, Osceola was known through much of his life as Billy Powell or Powell. In 1811, his great-uncle, Peter McQueen, became an Indian "prophet" as part of the growing native revivalist movement epitomized by the great Shawnee leader, Tecumseh. McQueen encouraged his family and other Creeks to rid themselves of all elements of American culture and moved his band, including young Billy Powell and his mother, south into Florida. For approximately the next five years, Billy and his mother were forced to wander between the St. Marks and Suwannee rivers of northern Florida trying to avoid U.S. and British conflicts. After the First Seminole War (1817-1818), Billy and his mother moved into central Florida. Here, he earned his adult name, *asī:yaholī*, which translates as "Black Drink Singer," spelled and pronounced by Americans as "Osceola." Although Osceola did not initially come across as a leader at Fort King until Thompson's councils with the Seminoles, Osceola's presence had been noticed. This was partly due to Osceola's elegant style of dress and mixed ethnic and racial background, resulting in physical features that set him apart from many of his countrymen (Wickman 1991).

**FORT KING, OSCEOLA AND SEMINOLE OBJECTIONS TO REMOVAL**

In this section, the central role Fort King played in the events leading up to the Second Seminole War is discussed. It was at Fort King that Andrew Jackson's final plans for Seminole removal were presented to Seminole and Black Seminole leaders (NHL Criterion 1). Here too the Seminoles, led by Osceola, voiced emphatic and persistent opposition to those plans (NHL Criteria 1 and 2). Increasing tensions eventually led to violence.

**Wiley Thompson, the Seminole Agency, and Fort King**

The Seminole Agency was moved to within 100 yards of Fort King due to increasing tensions between the Americans and the Seminoles. The date of the move is not definitely known, but is thought to have been completed by October 1834, when Thompson held the first meetings with Seminole leaders. The two terms "Fort King" and "Seminole Agency" quickly became synonymous and appear to have been used interchangeably (Sprague 1964:90). Several letters dating as early as 1832 originated from the "Fort King Seminole Agency" (Hunt and Piatek 1991:85).

During these first meetings, on October 21, 1834, the chiefs received what Thompson considered to be the last annuity payment due to them in Florida under the terms of the Treaty of Moultrie Creek

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(Mahon 1985:89). He made the following ominous note concerning the purchases made by the chiefs following their payment:

It has not escaped me, that the Indians, after they had received their annuity, purchased an unusually large quantity of powder and lead. I saw one keg of powder carried off by the chiefs, and I am informed that several whole kegs were purchased. I did not forbid the sale of these articles to the Indians, because such a course would have been a declaration of my apprehensions. It may be proper to add that the chiefs and Negroes have a deposit of forty or fifty kegs of powder, which I did not credit at the time (Sprague 1964:81).

Two days later, Thompson held a council with the Seminole leaders at Fort King to discuss the details of the Treaties of Payne's Landing and Fort Gibson. Captain Samuel L. Russell was also in attendance. Thompson made it clear that he did not call them together to talk about whether the Seminoles would honor the treaties. Rather, he only wished to work out the details of how they would honor them. To allay any fears they might have about their removal, Thompson assured them that he and Russell would accompany and take care of them on their journey westward. After making his points and providing the Seminoles with several questions to ponder, he allowed them to retire to discuss these matters (Cohen 1836; Potter 1836; Davis 1929; Mahon 1985:89-91).

Although Thompson promised the Seminole leaders privacy during their deliberations that night, informants among them supplied him with the details of the talks. In this way, Osceola first came to the attention of Thompson and his colleagues at Fort King. Although other Seminole leaders talked that night of acquiescing to the demands of Agent Thompson and the treaties he carried, Osceola spoke out firmly against removal. He openly declared his intentions to stay and, if necessary, to fight. He also spoke of those who wished to comply with Thompson as enemies of the Seminole people. Osceola's exhortations apparently swayed the rest of the tribal council, who elected to convey their objections to Thompson the next day (Cohen 1836; Potter 1836; Davis 1929; Mahon 1985:91-92).

### **Osceola and Seminole Objections to Removal**

On the second day of Thompson's first council with the Seminole leaders at Fort King, Osceola apparently sat silently as more senior leaders voiced their objections to removal. Holata Mico began by telling Thompson that the Seminoles wished peace with their American "brothers." Micanopy, the hereditary leader of the original Alachua Seminoles, stated that the Seminoles considered the Treaty of Moultrie Creek to remain in effect. Jumper, who had been chosen by the Seminoles to be their main spokesman, reiterated Micanopy's points. He also stated that when he and the other six Seminole leaders had accompanied Phagan to the west, they liked the lands there but did not care for the Indians who would be their new neighbors. More significantly, he said the Seminole delegation was forced to sign the Treaty of Fort Gibson and they did not understand it to mean that they were agreeing to remove to the west. Instead, they believed they were only stating that they liked the lands and would discuss the matter with the entire Seminole nation upon their return to Florida. Further, he asserted that the Seminole delegation at Fort Gibson did not have the authority to speak for the nation as a whole. He finished with an eloquent description of the Seminoles' desire to stay in Florida. Holata Emathla reiterated Jumper's points about the "bad" people that he observed in the western lands. Holata's brother, Charley Emathla, reiterated that the Treaty of Moultrie Creek was still valid for another seven years. Only when it had expired might the Seminoles consider removal. Regardless, he stated the Seminoles distaste for the long journey that would be required of them if they were to move.

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He said they would much prefer to stay in the land of their fathers (Cohen 1836; Potter 1836; Davis 1929; Mahon 1985:92).

Not surprisingly, Thompson was not pleased with these statements. He described the Seminoles' words as childish and not worthy of men who considered themselves to be chiefs. He made it clear that he wanted to hear no more talk of the Treaty of Moultrie Creek. Instead, he reiterated that he only wished to discuss the details of removal, not the merits of it. He demanded that the Seminole leaders meet with him again the next day to discuss only these details (Cohen 1836; Potter 1836; Davis 1929; Mahon 1985:92).

Thompson began the session the next morning at Fort King by asking the Seminole leaders to provide him with the answers to the questions concerning removal asked of them the previous two days. Holata Mico again began speaking on the behalf of the Seminoles by stressing that they wished to be friends with the Americans. He ended by flatly denying consent to remove west. Jumper stated again that the Seminoles considered the Treaty of Moultrie Creek still in effect. Even though he admitted that the western lands were probably better than the Seminole reservation specified in that treaty, he said that the Seminoles still considered Florida to be their home and preferred it to removal. Charley Emathla stated that the Treaty of Payne's Landing had been forced on the Seminoles. He also stated that he did not enjoy his journey west with Phagan. He finished by reminding Thompson of the promises the government made with the Seminoles concerning the Treaty of Moultrie Creek and its duration (Cohen 1836; Potter 1836; Davis 1929; Mahon 1985:92).

On this day, Thompson finally lost his patience with the Seminole leaders. When Micanopy reiterated that he did not sign the Treaty of Payne's Landing, Thompson openly called him a liar. When the chief stood by his claim, Thompson produced the Treaty and showed the leaders Micanopy's name and mark. The two men quarreled over this issue for the rest of the convention, neither modifying their positions (Cohen 1836; Potter 1836; Davis 1929; Mahon 1985:92; Covington 1993:74).

Thompson spoke to the leaders about the Treaties of Payne's Landing and Fort Gibson with "excited feeling," again stating that the Seminoles were bound by these treaties to remove to the West. After lecturing at some length on this issue, he told them that if they were somehow allowed to stay in Florida, they would be reduced to a state of hunger and poverty. Additionally, he told them that all laws of the state, including laws that would not permit American Indians to testify in court, would be applied to the Seminoles (Cohen 1836; Potter 1836; Davis 1929).

During Thompson's long and passionate lecture to the leaders on this day, Osceola attempted to convince Micanopy to speak out with more conviction against removal by whispering exhortations in his ear. His frustration with the chief and Thompson's lecture finally got the better of him when the Seminole Agent stated that no more annuity would be paid to the Seminoles in Florida. Osceola finally retorted that he did not care if he ever received any more of the white man's money. Thompson did his best to ignore this statement and continue his lecture. When Thompson finished, Osceola rose and gave what many have called the "Give me liberty or give me death" declaration of his people (Cohen 1836; Potter 1836; Davis 1929; Mahon 1985:92; Covington 1993:74-75; Laumer 1995:135-137):

The sentiments of the nation have been expressed. There is little more to be said. The people in council have agreed. By their chiefs they have uttered. It is well; it is truth, and must not be broken. When I make up my mind, I act. If I speak,

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what I say I will do. Speak or no speak, what I resolve that will I execute. The nation have consulted; have declared; they should perform. What should be, shall be. There remains nothing worth words. If the hail rattles, let the flowers be crushed.

The stately oak of the forest will lift its head to the sky and the storm, towering and unscathed (Cohen 1836).

It is clear that Osceola meant this as a warning not only to his American antagonists but also to what he perceived to be the weak-hearted “flowers” of his own people. Thompson ended the council in disgust shortly after this outburst. Due to the potential for conflict, the military presence in Florida had begun to increase even before this first meeting between Thompson and the Seminoles at Fort King. In 1832 Fort King was reopened. In the next few years, troops moved in and out of the fort with some regularity. New barracks were built, and the officers’ quarters, left unfinished when the fort was abandoned in 1829, were enlarged and finished as a hospital (Ott 1967:35; Mahon 1985:94-95).

A few months later, in December 1834, Thompson again held a council at Fort King in an attempt to convince the Seminoles to remove. He explained that he expected them to move to designated ports of embarkation, sell their cattle and horses, and board the ships peacefully. If they did not comply, troops would be used against them (Covington 1993:75). Thompson was quite pleased with the way this council went, as evidenced by a letter he wrote to Lewis Cass, Secretary of War:

After the business was disposed of Powell, a bold man and a determined young chief who has been perhaps more violently opposed to removal than any other, made some remarks in council, evidently under excited feelings. I at once entered into a very forceful conversation with him in which I expressed my regret that a chief who had acted so manly and correctly in all other matters should have acted so unwisely in regard to the Treaty of Payne’s Landing. He replied that he looked to the Camp Moultrie treaty as the one in force. Osceola said that as Thompson had to obey the President, so he, Osceola, was bound to obey the chiefs over him. I then asked him if any act of mine had shown any unkindness or want of friendship toward him or his people. He with emphasis replied, “I know that you are my friend, friend to my people...” The result was that we closed with the utmost good feelings and I have never seen Powell and the other chiefs so cheerful and in such a fine humor at the close of a discussion upon the subject of removal (Cubberly 1927:146-147).

General Duncan L. Clinch, central commander of the U.S. forces in Florida, was not as optimistic as Thompson. In a letter written at Fort King in January 1835, he opined:

...The more I see of this Tribe of Indians, the more fully am I convinced that they have not the least intention of fulfilling their treaty stipulations, unless compelled to do so by a stronger force than mere words...if a sufficient military force, to overawe them, is not sent into the Nation, they will not be removed, & the whole frontier may be laid waste by a combination of the Indians, Indian Negroes, & the Negroes on the plantations...(Carter 1960:99-101).

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General Clinch requested additional troops and cannons be sent to Fort King and Fort Brooke, which is now downtown Tampa.

Thompson arranged another meeting with the Seminoles at Fort King in March 1835. He and General Clinch ordered a special platform constructed to seat Seminole and U.S. dignitaries during the council.

During the proceedings, Thompson read a message from President Jackson to the 150 chiefs and warriors present:

...The game has disappeared from your country, your people are poor and hungry...The tract you ceded will soon be surveyed and sold and immediately occupied by a white population...You have no right to stay...I have directed the commanding officer to remove you by force...

The message was signed "your friend A. Jackson" (Steele 1986:7). But before the council could conclude, the newly constructed platform upon which the meeting was being held collapsed. After the confusion cleared, Jumper, again the speaker for the Seminole delegation, thanked Thompson for the message from the President, and then stated there were too many Seminole chiefs absent from the current meeting for the tribal delegation to make official comments. Therefore, he asked for and was granted another month to gather a more representative tribal council at Fort King for a full discussion (Mahon 1985:95; Hunt and Piatek 1991:90-91).

Over the course of the next month, many Seminoles arrived at Fort King, hoping to collect another annuity. By the time of the next council, which began on April 22, approximately 1,500 Seminoles were camped in the vicinity of the fort. Osceola seems to have been the main topic of conversation among the Americans present. One visitor noted that:

...the first question asked by those who had come to be present at the talk was, 'How is Powel – on which side is he?' To this we received for answer – 'O he is one of the opposition; but he is fast coming round. He has given us much trouble – restless, turbulent, dangerous – he has been busy with his people, dissuading them against the treaty – and thus sowing the seeds of discord where his influence, - for, though young, and a sub-chief merely, he is manifestly a rising man among them – if exerted on our side would greatly facilitate our views. But he has cooled down latterly and we have great hopes of him now (Laumer 1995:137).

Although the Seminoles did receive another annuity at this council, Thompson, clearly disturbed by the ammunition purchased with last year's stipend, prohibited the sale of powder and lead to the Seminoles. This apparently infuriated Osceola and he reportedly confronted Thompson with the following outburst:

I will make the white man red with blood; and then blacken him in the sun and rain, where the wolf shall smell his bones, and the buzzard live upon his flesh (Sprague 1964:86; Porter 1996:34).

Despite this confrontation, it seems that Jumper did most of the speaking for the Seminoles at this council. He opened with a two-hour speech against removal. Again, Thompson reacted angrily. With

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tempers flaring on both sides, General Clinch eventually assured the Seminole delegation that he was prepared to use his troops if the Seminoles did not agree to abide by the Treaty of Payne's Landing. Eventually, 16 Seminole leaders, including 8 chiefs and 8 "sub-chiefs," signed an acknowledgement that the Treaty was valid. Other important leaders, including Micanopy, Jumper, Holata Mico, Arpeika (Sam Jones), and Coa Hadjo refused to sign or were not present (Sprague 1964:84; Mahon 1985:95-96; Wickman 1991:32).

Osceola let Thompson know exactly how he felt when he stormed into the Agent's office a few months later. He used "violent" and "insulting" language against Thompson, told him that he despised his authority, described him as an intruder on the Indian lands, and made it clear that he would force him to leave them. Thompson immediately consulted with the officers at the nearby fort. They agreed with Thompson that such insolence could not go unpunished and ordered soldiers to seize Osceola as he left the Fort King reservation. As a result, he was arrested, handcuffed, and imprisoned in the fort's guardhouse. Osceola spent the earliest portion of his captivity at Fort King in an almost constant fury. After several days, he calmed to the point that he could have a reasonable discussion with Thompson. He apologized to the Agent, agreed to behave better in the future, and promised to sign the removal agreement if released. Thompson, having good reason to suspect his sincerity, said that he needed more proof. Osceola promised he would return in 10 days with his followers to sign the acknowledgement. He was released and fulfilled his promise on the appointed day. As Thompson and Clinch were not yet ready for the Seminole removal to begin, they allowed Osceola and his band to go back to their home. In the coming months, Thompson employed Osceola in various tasks, including the apprehension of Seminoles who raided American settlements. Eventually, the Agent was so convinced of Osceola's conversion that he presented him with a custom-built rifle (Cubberly 1927:146; Mahon 1985:96; Wickman 1991:33-36; Laumer 1995:123-124).

More evidence of Osceola's conversion was displayed in August 1835. He and 24 other Seminole leaders requested a council at Fort King in order to work out the details of the planned removal. At this council, Holata Emathla was selected to speak for the Seminole delegation. He requested a Seminole reservation in Indian Territory separate from the Creeks. He also requested that Thompson be designated their agent in their new western home. General Clinch, Agent Thompson, and Lieutenant Joseph W. Harris endorsed this plan and sent a letter of support to Secretary of War Lewis Cass (Covington 1993:74).

Although Thompson seemed optimistic about a largely peaceful removal following Osceola's apparent conversion, General Clinch remained apprehensive. In October 1835, he wrote that a number of Seminole leaders still refused to consent to removal. He requested additional troops because he was sure that force would be necessary. He also stated suspicions that Seminole forces, including Black Seminoles, were in communication with some enslaved African Americans on plantations in Florida (Carter 1960:182-184). His fears were apparently justified. Abraham, one of the most important Black Seminoles and Micanopy's most trusted advisor, was in communication with enslaved African Americans on plantations and recruited many of them to join forces with the Seminoles if war were to come. John Caesar, another important Black Seminole who was associated with King Philip, principal leader of the St. Johns River Seminoles, similarly recruited enslaved African Americans who had run away and free African Americans in the St. Augustine area. Black Seminoles were particularly opposed to removal because they felt certain it would result in slavery for their ranks under Creek masters in Indian Territory or on plantations in the South. Because of their resolve to avoid enslavement, some more recent scholars have argued that Black Seminoles "were *the* determining factor in the Seminoles' opposition to removal (Porter 1996:33)" (Klos 1995:150).

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Any hopes that Thompson or others harbored for a peaceful removal by the Seminoles were surely shattered in November 1835 when news arrived at Fort King of Charley Emathla's killing. Although he had spoken out against removal at several Fort King councils, Emathla never appeared to want to fight. By November, he was fully prepared to comply with Thompson and Clinch. Thus, he brought his cattle to Fort King for the promised reimbursement due to him under the conditions of the Treaty of Payne's Landing. However, he was intercepted on his return home by Osceola and several of his followers. After a brief argument, Osceola shot him. In order to drive home the point made earlier concerning the white man's money, Osceola did not take any of Emathla's reimbursement. Instead, he scattered it over and next to Emathla's body (Carter 1960; Mahon 1985:100-101).

### **THE SECOND SEMINOLE WAR**

Having discussed the origins of the Second Seminole War, this section focuses on the war itself, a conflict that marked the fiercest resistance offered by any American Indian group to Indian Removal policies. The section begins with a discussion of how central Fort King was to the progress of the war (NHL Criteria 1 and 6). Finally, a brief summary of Osceola's role in the Second Seminole War away from Fort King is provided as important background material necessary for an evaluation of "the productive period of his life." (NHL Criterion 2)

#### **Fort King's Role in the Second Seminole War**

From the end of 1833 through most of 1835, Agent Thompson and General Clinch made it clear to the Seminoles at Fort King that the United States fully expected them to remove west of the Mississippi River and that force would be used against them if necessary. Osceola and other Seminole leaders initially voiced strong opposition to removal. By the middle of 1835, they appeared much more willing to acquiesce. However, the killing of Emathla in November made it clear that they had changed their minds or had been merely telling the Agent and the General what they wanted to hear.

Now, open conflicts ensued. Osceola and his followers staged several raids in the Alachua area in December 1835. In one of these raids, Osceola personally led approximately 80 warriors in a successful ambush of a military baggage train on the road to Micanopy. A few days later, military scouts located the Seminoles in a hammock called Black Point. In the ensuing Battle of Black Point, they were able to break up the camp and retrieve some of their stolen possessions (Mahon 1985:101; DeBary, personal communication 2001). These Alachua raids were probably the first fights in which Osceola had ever taken part in his life. They served notice that he had developed a solid following among Seminole warriors despite his inexperience in combat (Weisman 1989:127; Wickman 1991:xxi).

Around Christmastime, King Philip and John Caesar led the Seminoles and Black Seminoles from the St. Johns area on raids against nearby plantations. Over the course of two days, they destroyed five of them and sent local settlers in a panic to coastal towns such as St. Augustine. John Caesar's earlier efforts to recruit local enslaved African Americans paid large dividends in these campaigns, with hundreds joining the Seminole cause (Mahon 1985:102; Porter 1996:39). On December 22, Governor Richard Call sent a letter from near Micanopy to President Jackson stating:

The whole country between the Suwannee and the St. Johns Rivers for the distance of fifty miles above the Indian boundary [the northern boundary of the

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main Seminole Reservation] is abandoned, the frontier inhabitants shut up in a few miserable stockade forts and the Indians traversing the country at will, burning and destroying wherever they appear. Before my arrival a number of skirmishes had taken place in which the Indians were invariably successful (Carter 1960:216).

Despite these skirmishes, most researchers consider December 28, 1835 to be the starting point of the Second Seminole War. On this day, the Seminoles launched attacks on two separate targets.

One attack focused on a party of slightly more than 100 soldiers on their way from Fort Brooke, near Tampa Bay, to Fort King. A Seminole force of more than 180 Seminole and Black Seminole warriors, led by Micanopy, Jumper, and Halpatter Tustenuggee (Alligator), ambushed them at a point where the road passed through a pine flatwood. Black Seminoles played an important role in this battle, fighting with great furor and then systematically killing the wounded. Only one soldier survived the attack, which quickly became known as Dade's Massacre. The site of this event is known today as the Dade Battlefield NHL (1973) (Mahon 1985:105-106; Steele 1986; Laumer 1995; Porter 1996:41-43).

While this battle was ending, Osceola and a small party of warriors ambushed Seminole Agent Wiley Thompson and Lieutenant Constantine Smith as they took an afternoon walk outside the palisade of Fort King. The two died instantly, with Thompson receiving 14 musket ball wounds and his scalp taken as a trophy. Osceola's men also attacked the home and store of Erastus Rogers, the sutler, killing him and several others in this structure, also located outside the fort's picket work. The officers inside Fort King believed that the fort itself was under attack and closed the stockade gates, not realizing that Thompson and Smith were outside. By the time troops ventured out, the Seminoles had already disappeared (Mahon 1985:103-104).

That night, Osceola met in the Wahoo Swamp with the victorious warriors from Dade's battle. According to Alligator, Thompson's scalp was placed on a pole and "speeches were addressed by the most humorous of the company to the scalp of General Thompson, imitating his gestures and manner of talking to them in council (Sprague 1964:91)."

The following remarks by Alligator, made sometime later, are also interesting to note:

We had been preparing for this [Dade's ambush and the murder of Wiley Thompson] more than a year. Though promises had been made to assemble on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January, it was not to leave the country, but to fight for it. In council, it was determined to strike a decided blow about this time. Our agent at Fort King had put irons on our men, and said we must go. Osceola said he was his friend, he would see to him (Sprague 1964:90).

Alligator's statements make it clear that, contrary to Thompson's assessments, Osceola and most of his countrymen had never warmed to the idea of removal. Further, Thompson's imprisonment of Osceola at Fort King and Thompson's attitude toward their people had certainly not been forgotten nor forgiven.

If it had not been clear before, the simultaneous attacks on Dade's party and the killing of Agent Thompson made it clear that the Seminoles would not be removed without serious bloodshed. The Seminoles had certainly crossed "the point of no return" in their dealings with the U.S. government.

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This was especially true for Andrew Jackson, who would deal with the Seminoles through violence rather than threats for the rest of his administration.

Early on, the Seminoles clearly had the upper hand in the conflict. Seminole antagonism and a wave of sickness led to the virtual abandonment of Florida's interior by the military and American civilians in 1836. Dade's Massacre and many other raids on troops traveling on the several roads to Fort King demonstrated that the fort was becoming more and more difficult to supply and reinforce. The fort was also considered to be redundant with Fort Drane located only approximately 20 miles away and many troops already stationed there. As a result, Fort King was abandoned in May 1836. Two months later, a group of Seminole warriors destroyed it through fire (Mahon 1985:173; Hunt and Piatek 1991:11).

**The New Fort King**

In April 1837, work began on a new Fort King (Ott 1967:35). It is likely that the new fort was constructed on the same hill as the earlier fort (GARI 1991). Just as its predecessor played an important role in the origins and earliest salvos of the Second Seminole War, the new Fort King was central to the rest of the war. The fort saw considerable use, with varying numbers of troops stationed there until the war was over.

In August 1837, just a few months after the new Fort King was established, a group of Seminole envoys met there with Major General Thomas S. Jesup, the new commander in Florida, to discuss peace. Jesup told them that there could be no such talk unless the Seminoles agreed to remove to the West. He said that when ready for removal, they could contact him while carrying white flags of truce for protection (Covington 1993:91).

Early in the summer of 1839, a more important council was held at Fort King by Major General Alexander Macomb, the Commanding General (highest ranking general) of the U.S. Army. Although he had been given charge of the entire conduct of the war in Florida, during his visit to the state in 1839 Macomb left military decisions to his underlings and focused instead on negotiations with the Seminoles. He arrived at Fort King in April and called on the Seminole chiefs to meet with him there to discuss a new reservation for them, "on the west side of the Peninsula below Pease Creek [now Peace River]" (Carter 1960:604-605). The new Florida commander, Brigadier General Zachary Taylor, had suggested this plan to Macomb as the only possible way to end hostilities. In anticipation of the meeting with the Seminoles, a special council house was constructed just to the west of the fort. The council began on May 18 with much pomp and circumstance and lasted two days. The two main Seminole leaders in attendance were Chitto Tustenuggee and Halleck Tustenuggee. The women and children in their bands were nearly naked, with only grain sacks for clothing. Macomb gave enough presents of calico and cotton to clothe them. In the face of such kindness and apparently tired of fighting, Chitto and Halleck heartily agreed to Macomb's plan and said they would induce their people to remove to the new reservation. Macomb was so pleased with his results that he issued a general proclamation on May 20 stating that the war was at an end. Shortly afterwards, President Jackson declared the reservation to be Seminole Indian Territory (White 1956; Carter 1960:608-610; Mahon 1985:256-258).

Unfortunately but predictably, Macomb's optimism was unfounded. The citizens of Florida immediately and furiously attacked his agreement and vowed to kill Seminoles wherever they were found. For their part, many Seminoles were unaware of the agreement or did not consider themselves

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bound by it on the grounds that the two Seminole leaders in attendance could not speak for the rest of the tribe. Thus, the war continued (Mahon 1985:257-263).

The next major event to occur at Fort King was on March 28, 1840. On this day, Captain Gabriel J. Rains led 16 men from the fort on a scouting mission. Not far from the fort, a group of almost 100 Seminole warriors ambushed the troops, killing two of them and wounding one more. As the battle progressed, Rains recognized that his men would soon be surrounded. In order to escape, he ordered a charge of 12 men back to Fort King. Rains was badly wounded in this maneuver, but with several of his men carrying him, he was able to get his troops back into the fort. Rains' wounds were so severe that he was not expected to live. He did recover, although it took two months before he was healthy enough to write a formal report of the incident. Newspapers in Florida called his actions at Fort King that day to be the most gallant of the war, and Rains was eventually brevetted to the rank of major (Mahon 1985:275).

In May 1840, General Walker Keith Armistead was appointed as the new Florida commander. He immediately established Fort King as the headquarters of the Army of the South and stationed 900 troops there. In November, he held a council at the fort with the Seminole leaders Tiger Tail and Halleck Tustenuggee. Also in attendance was a delegation of Seminoles who had recently visited the land set aside for the Seminoles west of the Mississippi. These Seminoles gave a favorable report of Arkansas, and Armistead tried to use this to convince Halleck and Tiger Tail on the merits of removal. To sweeten the deal, he offered each of them \$5,000 if they would surrender themselves and their bands for the purpose. The chiefs asked for two weeks to discuss the matter. During this time, they and their accompanying warriors collected supplies and liquor offered to them as rations and gifts. After two weeks, they decamped without agreeing to Armistead's offer. As a result, Armistead ordered the conflict resumed (Carter 1962:228; Mahon 1985:281-282).

Approximately two years later, on April 19, 1842, Halleck's band was located and attacked by the new Florida commander, Colonel William Jenkins Worth, near Lake Ahapopka. According to Mahon, this battle was probably the last skirmish of the war that could be considered a battle. Although most of Halleck's warriors escaped death or capture, much of their supplies were captured. As a result, Halleck, with two of his wives and two children, showed up at Worth's camp 10 days later for a conference. After a few days, they accompanied Worth back to Fort King. Under orders from Worth, Colonel Garland gathered Halleck's followers under the ruse of a feast with a great deal of liquor. After three days, most of Halleck's band had arrived for the promised festivities. At this time, troops surrounded and captured the Seminoles without a fight. Halleck was so overcome with rage and surprise that he fainted. The total captured included 43 warriors, 37 women, and 34 children. At the time, this was more than a third of the total Seminole population believed to be left in Florida. Worth gave Halleck \$1,000 and used him to contact the rest of the tribe, urging that they move into the reservation south of the Peace River (Mahon 1985:308-309).

**Osceola as a Seminole Leader**

Osceola had earned his position as a Seminole leader before the war primarily through his passionate and eloquent arguments against removal. His speeches at Fort King probably caused European-Americans to focus attention on him, but it is clear that he was beginning to gain the attention and respect of his own people as well. However, despite the fame accorded him today, Osceola's tenure as an influential leader among the Seminoles lasted only approximately a year.

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Patricia Wickman, noted researcher on the life of Osceola, considers his confrontation with Agent Wiley Thompson in the summer of 1835 to be the first event in the “climactic phase” of Osceola’s life (1991:33). This confrontation at Fort King caused Osceola’s imprisonment. Although Thompson did not realize it at the time, Osceola and the Seminoles were infuriated by this act and used it as a rallying cry against Thompson and the U.S. Seminole removal plan.

The execution of Charley Emathla in November 1835 may have been the first real demonstration of the power that Osceola had gained among his people (Weisman 1989:127; Wickman 1991:33). Unlike Osceola, the Seminoles clearly recognized Emathla as a chief. Osceola’s execution of him sent a clear signal to other Seminoles who shared Emathla’s desire to acquiesce to American demands for removal. It also was an undeniable announcement of what, for a brief period at least, was to be a new order among the Seminoles, an order where leadership could be earned through actions and demonstrated ability rather than by heredity.

Osceola cemented his role as a leader through the raids he led on civilian and military targets in the Alachua area in December 1835 (Weisman 1989:127). His new role as a man of influence and power among the Seminoles was clearly on display later that month when he led a party of 60 warriors in the attack against Agent Thompson at Fort King (Weisman 1989:127; Wickman 1991:33).

During the early months of the war, Osceola had command of a large contingent of Seminole and Black Seminole warriors in a stronghold the military referred to as the Cove of the Withlacoochee. Just three days after the execution of Agent Thompson, a military force led by General Clinch ventured into the Cove and was ambushed by a Seminole force consisting of approximately 250 warriors, including 30 Black Seminoles. Osceola led the Seminole attack in what came to be known as the First Battle of the Withlacoochee. Although Clinch’s troops were eventually able to drive off Osceola’s men, the heavy casualties they suffered coupled with their dwindling supplies forced them to retreat from the Cove. The Seminoles regarded this as a great victory, even though their leader was wounded in the arm or hand during the battle (Mahon 1985:108-112; Weisman 1989:127; Wickman 1991:33, 38-39).

In March 1836, General Gaines attempted another strike against the Seminoles in the Cove of the Withlacoochee. He quickly found himself surrounded by more than 1,000 Seminole and Black Seminole warriors. Gaines ordered a hastily constructed log breastwork he named Camp Izard in honor of the first officer to be shot in the battle. Osceola and the rest of the Seminoles laid siege for more than a week before John Caesar, a Black Seminole leader, took it upon himself to ask for a council. Since justice had been done to Agent Thompson at Fort King, Osceola would be satisfied to end the hostilities as long as the Seminoles were allowed to remain in Florida. Seminole leaders proposed that the Withlacoochee River become the new northern boundary for their reservation. General Gaines replied that he would present it to the proper authorities, and then the council was interrupted by U.S. reinforcements led by General Clinch. Gaines turned over his command to Clinch, and boasted that he had just negotiated an end to the hostilities. However, Gaines’ negotiations with Osceola and the other Seminole leaders were not recognized as binding by the U.S., and hostilities continued (Mahon 1985:147-150; Weisman 1989:98-99; Wickman 1991:43).

Within weeks, General Scott was leading another military force into the Cove of the Withlacoochee. In what may have been Osceola’s last great action as an important Seminole leader, he led an attack against Scott’s troops on March 31, 1836, in the process killing two soldiers and wounding an additional thirteen (Mahon 1985:152; Weisman 1989:99,127).

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Following Scott's campaign in the Cove of the Withlacoochee, many Seminoles broke into smaller bands led by individual leaders who operated somewhat independently from each other. Thus, Osceola could no longer take part in military actions or councils that involved a thousand warriors and many of the other important leaders. Left to his own with at most 250 warriors, Osceola spent much of the rest of 1836 in the Alachua area. On June 9, he led a force of 150 to 250 warriors against Fort Defiance near Micanopy, but was eventually repulsed. On July 19, he led an attack on a military wagon train headed for the fort. This ambush became known as the Battle of Welika Pond and resulted in five soldiers killed and six wounded.

On August 7, 1836, Fort Drane, established on General Clinch's plantation in what is now northwestern Marion County, was abandoned by the military because of rampant disease such as malaria among the troops stationed there. Osceola and his band quickly moved in. For the next two months, they feasted on the 12,000 bushels of corn and additional sugar cane that had been left in Clinch's fields by the evacuating troops. On August 21, Osceola's band was attacked by a force of more than 100 troops but succeeded in repelling them. However, on October 1, Osceola quickly abandoned the fort when he learned that Florida Governor Richard Keith Call was leading another force several hundred strong his way. Although Osceola had enjoyed the crops at Fort Drane, he also contracted an illness there, probably the same malaria that had caused the military to abandon the fort. He suffered from this illness for the rest of his life. Although still well known and feared by the military and the citizens of Florida, Osceola's power and prestige among his own people suffered greatly as his disease progressed and the Seminoles broke into smaller and smaller bands in attempts to avoid capture (Mahon 1985:175-177; Weisman 1989:128; Wickman 1991).

By the early summer of 1837, Osceola had moved his dwindling band to the St. Johns area, possibly in an attempt to rebuild a following among the Mikasukis there. In March of that year, Jesup and several Seminole leaders representing Micanopy signed the capitulation for removal discussed previously. To indicate their compliance with the details of the agreement, those Seminoles along the St. Johns gathered near Fort Mellon, near present-day Sanford. In April, Osceola brought in his people. Once there, he cooperated with the military's efforts to gather the rest of the Seminoles together in one place by organizing a traditional ball game. Things were so cordial that Osceola even lodged one night with Colonel William Harney in his officer's tent. However, in early June, Osceola and several other Seminole leaders once again reaffirmed their resistance to removal by traveling across the peninsula to Fort Brooke liberating, and in some cases, kidnapping, the large group of Seminoles at the emigration camp there. Many in the military believed that Osceola had never planned to emigrate, but was only stalling and trying to secure free food for himself and his people at Fort Mellon before resuming hostilities (Sprague 1964:178; Francke 1977:24; Mahon 1985:200-204; Weisman 1989:128; Wickman 1991:44).

This event had a profound impact on General Jesup, the Florida commander at the time. From this point on, he was resolved to use whatever methods he deemed necessary to end the war. To this end, he enlisted American Indians, such as Delawares and Shawnees, whom he knew would not only be willing to fight the Seminoles, but also to enslave their women and children. He also dealt ruthlessly with captured Seminoles, threatening to hang them if they did not provide information on the whereabouts of their allies. Similarly, he sent out messengers to family members stating that if they did not surrender, their captive brothers, fathers, or sons would be executed. But his most infamous and effective tactic was to capture Seminoles under flags of truce or in similar situations where they thought they were assured safety (Mahon 1985:204-216).

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One of the earliest to be captured in this way was Osceola. In October 1837, he and Coa Hadjo had sent word that they were in the vicinity of St. Augustine and were willing to meet in a conference with the military. Jesup sent explicit orders to General Joseph M. Hernandez that authorized the capture of the warriors at the planned parley. Hernandez met with them at their camp approximately a mile from Fort Peyton. The camp was well marked with a large white flag flying over it. During the parley, Coa Hadjo clearly stated that the Seminoles at the camp were not turning themselves in to the military, which they knew would mean deportation, but rather, wanted to sue for peace. Hernandez had with him a captive Seminole leader named Blue Snake. He called on the leader for support. But Blue Snake flatly stated that his understanding was that this meeting was to involve negotiations, not capture. This was clearly not Hernandez's intention, for at this instant he called on his troops to capture the entire camp. It is quite possible that Osceola knew beforehand that he would not be allowed to leave this meeting. By this point though, he had grown discouraged about the Seminoles' chances to remain in Florida. He had also seen his support among his people dwindle and was suffering from illness (Mahon 1985:214-216; Wickman 1991:xxiv, 45-46).

Osceola was initially made a prisoner at Fort Peyton. He was soon transferred to Fort Marion, the transformed Castillo de San Marcos in St. Augustine. Here, he was allowed to send out a runner to call in his family and small band of followers. On December 31, 1837, Osceola and his family were transferred to Fort Moultrie, South Carolina. There, he enjoyed a brief period as a celebrity when he posed for the famous portraits of himself made by George Catlin. However, his illness progressed rapidly, and he died at the fort on January 30, 1838. He was buried on the fort grounds the next day (Wickman 1991:xxv).

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## Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- Preliminary Determination of Individual Listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- Previously Listed in the National Register.
- Previously Determined Eligible by the National Register.
- Designated a National Historic Landmark.
- Recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey: #
- Recorded by Historic American Engineering Record: #

## Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State Historic Preservation Office: Tallahassee, Florida
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency: Southeast Archaeological Center  
National Park Service  
2035 East Paul Dirac Drive  
Johnson Building, Suite 120  
Tallahassee, Florida 32310
- Local Government
- University
- Other (Specify Repository): See Table 1

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**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

Acreage of Property: 36.2 acres

UTM References: UTM Zone 17 North; NAD 83

Points	Northing	Easting
A	3229509.130	394640.424
B	3229507.950	394937.375
C	3229304.325	394935.531
D	3229304.279	395128.161
E	3229285.993	395128.009
F	3229286.035	395025.716
G	3229181.246	395024.886
H	3229181.353	394934.417
I	3229103.531	394933.574
J	3229103.867	394721.313
K	3229162.908	394722.025
L	3229163.033	394626.467
M	3229104.016	394626.139
N	3229103.865	394545.341
O	3229405.005	394546.014
P	3229404.483	394639.841

## Verbal Boundary Description:

The boundary of the nominated property is delineated by the polygon whose vertices are marked by the above UTM reference points.

## Boundary Justification:

The boundaries of the Fort King site are limited mostly to lands that are currently in public ownership (the city and county are co-owners and are involved in a cooperative arrangement for management purposes). These lands have been obtained by government agencies based on extensive and intensive historical research and archaeological surveys in the local area (see Figure 19). The boundaries of the Fort King site also include the "Fort King Burial Grounds" tract owned by the Daughters of the American Revolution. This small parcel of land makes up the southwestern corner of the Fort King site.

The earliest survey in the vicinity of Fort King was conducted by Wilfred T. Neill in 1953–1954 and consisted mostly of surface collection with limited shovel testing. In 1989 and 1991, Bruce Piatek conducted power auger surveys of the property and Bill Hunt conducted detailed historical

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document research. In 1994 and 1998, Gary Ellis led investigations that consisted of reiterative metal detecting surveys, shovel testing, and unit excavation.

Within the boundary of the Fort King site, as described above, are the archaeological remains of the original Fort King destroyed by the Seminoles, the rebuilt Fort King, and several outlying buildings associated with the fort, possibly including a sutler's store (see Figure 49). Additionally, within the above boundary are archaeological remains associated with the many military groups and Seminoles who bivouacked and/or camped around Fort King during its existence (see Figure 50). The boundary, as described above, probably does not include the locations of several structures associated with Fort King, such as the council "platform" and Seminole Agency. As the extent of development surrounding the Fort King site is limited, it is possible that the locations of these structures may be documented in the future if further research is conducted outside the current boundaries. If such documentation does occur, the boundaries of the Fort King site may be amended to include these structures.

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DESIGNATED A NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK  
February 24, 2004